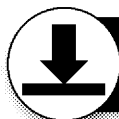Zig Zag Education

2015 specification
first exams in 2017 (2016 for AS)

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Robert Browning

'Poetic Voices' Study Guide for
AS / A Level AQA English Language
and Literature with Recordings

Download support files
from zzed.uk/productsupport

zigzageducation.co.uk

**POD
9619**

🐦 Follow us on Twitter **@ZigZagEng**

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...
Register at **publishmenow.co.uk**

Contents

Teacher's Introduction

Robert Browning's poetry is an ideal choice for the AQA AS and A Level Language and Literature specifications (7706 and 7707). Browning dedicated much of his career to exploring how poetry can convey complex, conflicted poetic voices which reveal characters who are often unaware of their true natures. For students, the anthology offers a rewarding range of forms and voices, from the high drama of 'Porphyria's Lover' and 'My Last Duchess' to the deep personal feelings of later poems such as 'Prospice'. Students of all abilities will find much to respond to, with enough complexity to challenge those aiming at top grades, but the anthology is also accessible enough to allow less-advanced students to develop confident responses.

This study guide supports students preparing for the AQA AS and A Level Language and Literature specifications (7706 and 7707). It is a concise, readable guide to the selection of Robert Browning's poems for the Views and Voices (AS) and Telling Stories (A Level) papers.

This guide will support any scheme of work on Browning's poetry, providing a thought-provoking discussion of each poem. The focus is on the four core elements of the subject content: the presentation of time, the importance of place, how people and their relationships are realised, and the presentation of events. In addition to this, each poem receives a Key Focus, exploring a specific aspect of Browning's poetic craft and language use in greater depth. Students are prompted to deeper thinking about the poems and to make connections at more sophisticated levels when selecting poems to write about in examination conditions. The guide covers the content of the AQA scheme of work on the Poetic Voices section of the specifications.

The guide also includes sections on:
- Browning's life
- Some literary and social contexts for Browning's work
- Browning's style and voices
- The key features of each poem
- Detailed analyses of each poem, with individual and group activities as well as discussion questions to open up the poems' wider thematic concerns
- Advice on essay structure – AS
- Advice on essay structure – A Level
- A glossary of terms
- Suggestions for further reading
- Suggested answers to activities

> **Remember!**
> Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

How to use this resource
This guide can be used to help you prepare your own schemes of work, to set as preparatory reading before a lesson, or to support homework and independent study. Students may find it helpful to have these notes to refer to when writing essays as well as preparing for mock and public examinations. The detailed notes on each poem contain a 'Key Focus' section; the aim of this is to explore a distinctive feature of the writing in that poem, and to open up a topic for discussion which could be applied to other poems in the collection.

NB Comparative tasks are only suitable for the AS specification and have been indicated accordingly.
The extensive glossary will support students not only in their work on this unit, but in approaching any literary text they encounter in the examination.
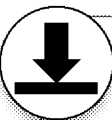
Eleven supporting audio recordings of the discussed poems are provided in MP3 format on the ZigZag Education Support Files system, which can be accessed via **zzed.uk/productsupport**

These recordings can be copied onto a school network, providing this can only be accessed by students attending the purchasing institution.

Free Updates!

Register your email address to receive any future free updates* made to this resource or other English resources your school has purchased, and details of any promotions for your subject.
resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

Go to zzed.uk/freeupdates

Downloadable Support File Track List

Track	Title
1	My Last Duchess
2	The Lost Leader
3	The Laboratory
4	Cristina
5	Johannes Agricola in Meditation
6	Porphyria's Lover
7	Evelyn Hope / Constancy
8	Meeting at Night
9	Parting at Morning
10	'De Gustibus—'
11	Prospice

Student Introduction

'Poetic Voices' appears on the AS and A Level specifications. The same poems ar[e]
Below is a summary of the key details.

Specification	Paper	Marks (% f ... dict)	Tim[e]
AS	1 (Views and Voice[s]	...0 (27%)	45 mi[n]
A Level	1 (Telling ... s)	25 (10%)	45 mi[n]

As the unit ti... ig... ...e main focus in your study of these poems is how Bro[wning]
poems. Wit... ..., you will explore the following:
- The pre...tation of time in Browning's poems: how speakers relate to their [past;]
  how speakers look forward to the future.
- The importance of place: how speakers convey their sense-impressions of a [place;]
  express emotions and identities.
- How people and relationships are conveyed in poetry: use of physical descri[ption;]
  social class and gender, speech and thought, how speakers seek to manipula[te]
  themselves or a relationship.
- How events are presented: which events are stressed and which suppressed[;]
  other poetic techniques to convey a speaker's sense-impression of the even[t.]

Assessment Objectives
- AO1: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary stu[dy,]
  associated terminology and coherent written expression
  - This tests whether you can apply linguistic a... ...ra...y concepts and me[thods]
    craft. You must use precise and rele[va]n[t] te...iology and express your [in an]
    academic style.
- AO2: Analyse ways in w... ne... i..gs are shaped in texts.
  - This t...ts ... ...ou can demonstrate an understanding of a questio[n]
    in... at...ns of relevant parts of the poems. You should be able to a[nalyse]
    au...craft, providing interpretive comments on any techniques cre[ated.]
- AO4 (**AS only**): Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and [li...]
  - This tests whether you can make links between poems and explore wa[ys ...]
    and different.

Methods of language analysis

In order to explain how Browning has created a distinctive voice for each speake[r] will need to refer to a range of different methods of language analysis. When yo[u] you have information for each of these:

1. Phonetics, phonology and prosodics: this concerns how Browning uses the s[…] he combines sounds across phrases (using techniques such as **alliteration** a[nd] uses poetic **metre** to stress certain words within […]s. Browning's use o[f] important in how he conveys feelings with[in …] voice, and he frequent[ly] combinations of sounds and stre[…] re very distinctive.
2. Lexis and semantics: the c[…] ces […] words for their meanings and connotati[on] **language** such as s[…] ar […] metaphor. Browning's **dramatic lyrics** and mon[o…] figurat[…] gu[…], often at a structural level.
3. Gramm[ar …] words are combined to shape meanings. Pay close attention […] **pronouns**, verb **moods** and voices, and sentence structures to express them[…]
4. Pragmatics: how a speaker's assumptions about a listener or reader shape t[…] Browning's speakers are situated in settings where there is a 'listener' withi[n …] and the speaker deliberately seeks to construct a version of themselves whi[ch…] Other speakers may not be talking to anyone in particular but their choices o[f…] others will react to what they say.
5. Discourse: how Browning uses forms of poetry to shape the effects of his p[…] he fits ideas into the poetic **line**: some speakers are very controlled, wherea[s…] end of a line (**enjambment**) as their ideas spill out.

Key Terms

As you read this study guide you will find important terms are marked in bold. If [a] explained in the glossary at the back of the guide. A selection of important terms [at] the end of the notes on that poem.

Robert Browning – His Life, Work c

In his biography of Browning, G K Chesterton wrote, 'His work has the mystery which belongs to the complex; his life the much greater mystery which belongs to the simple.'[1] To many readers in his own time, Browning was baffling, obscure and even unreadable, yet he was a remarkable poet whose exploration of voices, subjectivity and psychological complexity went far beyond what had been attempted before in English literature.

Robert Browning was born in Camberwell in South London in 1812, the same year as Dickens. His father was a clerk at the Bank of England and his mother a devoutly religious woman. He grew up in a home full of books and immersed himself in them, mastering five languages by the age of 14. By 18, he had decided he would become a poet and 'nothing else', though few early works achieved success. *Paracelsus* (1835) at least attracted the attention of William Wordsworth, to whom Browning would later address 'The Lost Leader'. Browning's fortunes reached their lowest ebb when, following the failure of three plays, his long poem *Sordello* was lampooned for being utterly unreadable. Thomas Carlyle commented that his wife was 'a man, a city or a book' and Sir Henry Jones remarked somewhat dryly that, movement, the sudden exclamation made to convey a complex thought, the cross antecedents, the elision of connecting relatives … make it difficult to decipher'.[2]

Browning refused to abandon 'brilliancy, swiftness of movement [and] the sudden complex thought' and he enjoyed great success with his series of pamphlets called published between 1841 and 1846. In these he created his greatest dramatic lyrics 'The Laboratory', 'Johannes Agricola in Meditation' and 'My Last Duchess'. Chester a new field of poetry', in which he presented 'the insatiable realism of passion', and that Browning developed a form of poetry in which he could dramatise the working

In 1845, Browning married Elizabeth Barrett, already a widely read and admired poet, was confined to a foul, dusty room by her domineering father, who was terrified house, but she and Browning married and escaped to Italy, where they lived and 1861. While in Italy he published *Men and Women*, and in 1864, back in London, 1889 and was buried alongside many of England's greatest writers, in Poets' Corner novelist Henry James, reflecting on Browning's life, wrote, 'a good many writers been entombed in the Abbey, but none of the odd ones have been so great and

---

[1] *http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks12/1204401h.html*
[2] *https://www.bartleby.com/223/0306.html*

Four contexts

Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1835, just as Browning was trying to estab[...] scene, and he lived the rest of his life under her reign. It would be impossible to [...] every possible social and cultural context for Browning's work in such a rich and [...] shall focus on four which are particularly relevant to Browning's work.

Realism and social engagement

The dominant literary form of the nineteenth century [...] the novel, and writers [...] Gaskell used their work to address what was [...]own as 'The Condition of England[...] to industrialisation led to milli[...] livin[...] in slums, and the old rhythms of rural life [...] machines growing rich [...] [...]a[...]s empire. Novelists' depictions were often shoc[...] misery in w[...] n [...]y had to live. Browning's choices of subjects and settings [...] *Régime* – se[...]tant from Dickens' London, for example, but he used his verse [...] the corruption and blindness of those in positions of power.

Romanticism

Browning was eight when John Keats died, and he met Wordsworth as a young m[...] when the influence of Romantic poets was still strongly felt. The Romantic move[...] such as Shelley and Byron, foregrounded lyrical expression and exploration of su[...] Shelley argued that a poet should be a 'hierophant'; that is, a mystic who has the [...] feelings and experiences far greater than any normal person. Browning, howeve[...] writing, not seeking to escape the troubles of a world 'where men sit and hear e[...] closely with characters who inhabit the darker corners of everyday life.

Victorian medievalism

The Victorians loved the Middle Ages; architects built in the Gothic style, self-co[...] medieval cathedrals in buildings such as the Houses [...]ar[...]ent and the Natur[...] laureate, Tennyson, wrote long poems set in the [...] of Arthurian myth, evok[...] ideals of an age of chivalry and cour[...] [...]e [...]hile Browning set many of his poe[...] recreate the medieval rom[...] [...]red by other writers, but to use character[...] unusual, sometimes [...] [...]s psychological profiles.

Formal inno[...]s

While Tennyson was looking back to the Middle Ages, other writers were experi[...] approaches to poetic form and subjects. Gerard Manley Hopkins created poetry [...] techniques of kenning and alliteration to create restless, energetic verse that exp[...] the natural world and his deep Roman Catholic faith. Christina Rossetti, on the o[...] experience and sexuality in provocative ways in poems such as 'Goblin Market'. [...] be seen as part of the Victorian movement to challenge what a poem was, how i[...] could write about.

Poetic voice

In his preface to his early work, *Sordello*, Browning stated that, 'my stress lay on [?] of a soul: little else is worth study'. The poem itself was a failure, attracting mock[?] unreadable complexity, but it helps understand Browning's methods and craft as [?] 'developments' can be read in two ways: firstly, in many of his poems, Browning [?] speaker grapples with a particular idea or problem; the other way of reading it is [?] mind has been shaped by experience. The first reading is [?] rounded in a text, [?] **markers** and **syntax**; the second reading is often [?] and Browning uses **iron[?]** obsessions which have made the speak[?] feel as they do.

Browning was an impo[?] writer for his choice of forms, and several poems in [?] **monologue[?]** own [?] used the term 'dramatic' in the title of two of his books, [?] seeing the s[?] of the poem not merely as a 'persona', but as a figure in a dr[?] audience. Browning borrows techniques from drama, in which the revelation of [?] the development of action (Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is perhaps the most famous ex[?] changes of topic and the evident attempt to manipulate a listener to sympathise [?] are all common in Browning's monologues.

Many poems are directly addressed to a second-person **listener** – love poetry, for [?] 'you' or 'thee' (as in Shakespeare's 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?'). H[?] beyond this by placing the audience of the poem within its dramatic world. In 'M[?] listener is an envoy sent to arrange the Duke's marriage to the daughter of a cou[?] the speaker narrates the action through a series of **imperatives** to the poisoner. [?] 'Cristina' and 'Porphyria's Lover', the audience is not specified, and the drama ar[?] inner thoughts of a deranged man.

To create the illusion of **natural speech** in his dramat[?] [?] logues, Browning us[?] shifts of topic, exclamations and **elision**. The[?] [?] to suggest the speaker is[?] feelings as they occur to him. In the [?] er [?]ics, such as 'Home Thoughts' and [?] places less emphasis on the [?] [?]ques, employing more conventional poetic [?]

This select[?] [?]e [?]y presents a cross-section of the different speakers and **vo[?]** career. Som[?] [?]e voices seem deeply personal, such as in 'Home Thoughts' an[?] 'Johannes Agricola' identifies the speaker as a real historical figure. Others use s[?] characteristics of certain historical periods, such as the cruel, sensuous aristocra[?] power-mad Duke of 'My Last Duchess'.

Browning's settings serve many different functions. In 'Porphyria's Lover' the storm [?] **pathetic fallacy** which evokes the speaker's madness. In 'The Laboratory', the poiso[?] **Gothic** atmosphere of mystery and danger, while the wider historical setting of the [?] imagine a period associated with violence and sensuous excess. Poems set in specif[?] Duchess', 'Cristina', 'Johannes Agricola') are not intended to represent those perioc[?] but to draw on the reader's associations of those periods as part of the way they in[?] thereby enable the reader to infer the comment on society and human nature whic[?]

Time in Browning's poetry is highly complex[?] [?]te sh[?] [?]g between present, pas[?] few lines to convey the swirling curre[?] ot [?] [?]ory and desire. Some poems in t[?] imagined futures, such as wh[?] [?] s t[?] [?]e ('Prospice') and the afterlife ('De Gusti[?]

While his c[?] [?]o[?] [?]y Tennyson mastered the art of producing magnificent, hi[?] poetry, Brov[?] [?]sed **sound and rhyme** very differently. Sometimes sound is fo[?] particular mood or emotion occurring within the speaker, often using **alliteratio[?]** evoking a landscape, he uses **sound iconicity** to convey a rich sense of being in th[?] rhyme schemes is often significant, used to underscore the emotional crescendo [?] for example, or to give auditory support to the obsession and solipsism of 'Porph[?]

The early twentieth-century scholar Sir Henry Jones' comment on *Sordello* is wo[...]
swiftness of movement, the sudden exclamation made to convey a complex thou[...]
parenthetical antecedents, the elision of connecting relatives … make it difficult t[...]
a reason to admire Browning's achievements?

Browning's forms

Browning is widely regarded as the greatest writer of dra[...] monologues in th[...]
term 'dramatic monologue' should not be applied [...] ll [...] poems in this selecti[...]
useful definition of the terms 'dramatic r[...] gu[...] 'dramatic lyric' and 'lyric':

- *Dramatic monologue*: 'a co[...] [...] or monodrama [in which] the speaker [...]
  or she wishes to b[...] [...] listener. The reader does not know whether [...]
  one ca[...] [...] mind of the speaker, and therefore the form allows f[...]
- *Drama[...]*: a poem in which 'there is no action, only the presentation of [...]
  musings[...] The words seem scarcely to be spoken but rather to rise from th[...]
  of feeling. … Browning introduces an ironical contrast between how the spe[...]
  the reader sees them.'
- *Lyric*: a poem 'in which a *persona* of the poet speaks, giving utterance to tho[...]

Key Terms

Diction	an umbrella term to describe the lexical, phonological, syn[...] formal choices made by a poet in constructing a poem.
Discourse markers	words and phrases that serve to structure a poem, indicati[...] place, for example, and also indicating the speaker's perce[...] poem relate to one another.
Dramatic monologue	a poem which narrates a sequence of e[...]ents. The 'dramati[...] speaker's position as a charac[...] [...]in the narrative, usua[...]
Elision	the omission of wor[...] ic [...]ould ordinarily be included i[...]
Fragmentary syntax	sentences [...] [...]k off or are otherwise incomplete.
Frame	[...]uctural device where the main narrative is book-ende[...] to the immediate subject matter of the story.
Gothic	a literary genre associated with violence, death, the supern[...]
Imperative	the mood of verbs used to give instructions.
Irony	an effect created whereby the implied meaning of an uttera[...] literal meaning of the words. In literary discourse it also ac[...] effect of a character's utterances where the reader perceiv[...] the character intends them to be understood.
Pathetic fallacy	a technique whereby the setting (and often the weather) i[...] character's inner mood (e.g. if someone says 'the leaves da[...] infer they were happy).
Rhyme	the correspondence of sound at the end of lines of poetry. [...] rhyme, where sounds are repeated wit[...] in a line, or pararh[...] identical sounds are employe[...]
Second-person listener	the 'you' in a poem [...] [...]ia [...]where the listener becomes [...] fictional sc[...] [...] [...]em, rather than an imagined figure po[...]
Sound ico[...]	[...]se of sound to mirror meaning. This includes, but is n[...]
Syntax	the arrangement of words, clauses and phrases within an u[...]
Voice	a broad term which describes not only the perspective ad[...] narrating an event (such as third- or first-person), but also [...]

---

[3] All examples taken from Kennedy and Hair, *The Dramatic Imagination of Robert Browning*, Colum[...]

The poems

1. **'My Last Duchess'** Set in Italy during the Renaissance in a grand ducal palace, is narrated by the Duke himself. He presents a portrait of his late wife and te... Browning creates a voice whose self-obsession and vanity blinds him to the ...
   - o **Themes**: power, pride, love, relationships, art, honesty and dishonesty, ...

2. **'The Lost Leader'** The poem presents a speaker who fe... betrayed by their ... course of a conflict. It was inspired by Browning's fe...ings of anger at Words... cause in British politics, but the poem a... ds ...licitly referring to any actua...
   - o **Themes**: relationships. p...n...l f...ings, art, politics, power, turning p...

3. **'The Laboratory'** A ...tic ...ate woman plans the murder of a love rival in e... poem ...es ...s ...or the use of time in shifting between the speaker narra... presen... ...emories of the past as well as desires for the future.
   - o **Themes**: love, revenge, power, sensuality, death, class

4. **'Cristina'** The speaker is a man who fell in love with an aristocratic woman, a... advances, he believes that, at least for a moment, she shared his feelings. Th... Browning's favourite motifs, that of the lover whose obsession is so powerf... beloved – in this case, the speaker thinks he possesses Cristina's soul for ev...
   - o **Themes**: obsession, love, powerful feelings, delusion, power, men and w...

5. **'Johannes Agricola in Meditation'** The speaker in this monologue is a Germa... that God had decided at the moment he created the universe which people w... hell. He thinks he is one of the chosen, and as such could commit the vilest c... paradise.
   - o **Themes**: power, pride, God, beliefs

6. **'Porphyria's Lover'** One of Browning's most famous ...s, where a man w... lover to slip away from the aristocratic world ...t ...n...ally inhabits. Because thence, he kills her in order to keep ...h ...m forever. A little like 'Cristin... line between romantic desir... ...n...gerous obsession.
   - o **Themes**: love, r...v...ge, m...and women, class, powerful feelings

7. **'Home... ...ht ...rom Abroad'** This is a paean to England, drawing on the fe... during ...t voyage to Italy. It is an evocative lyric, expressing feelings of y... English countryside in springtime.
   - o **Themes**: place, longing, powerful feelings, nature

8. **'Meeting at Night'** This short lyric relates the story of a lover journeying to n... lonely farmhouse. The poem is notable for the way Browning narrates the a... and for the richness of the poem's sonic palette.
   - o **Themes**: love, place, journeys, men and women

9. **'Parting at Morning'** The companion piece to 'Meeting at Night', this shifts t... woman in the relationship. It is distinctive for being even more concise than... remarkably rich visual impression in only four lines.
   - o **Themes**: nature, love, men and women

10. **'De Gustibus—'** The title refers to a Latin maxim w... ...h, i... full, means rough... taste.' The speaker addresses the first s...za ...is friend, who, he thinks, w... death. His ghost, however, w...ll ...in ...e Romantic landscape of Italy.
    - o **Themes**: death ...ly, ...aly, England, men and women, desire

11. **'Prosp...** ...e s... ...er imagines death and states he has nothing to fear of i... rejecti... ...ar and refusal to turn away from destiny.
    - o **Themes**: death, life, powerful feelings

1. My Last Duchess

Summary

The Duke of Ferrara is planning to remarry the daughter of a wealthy co
wife but also a sizeable dowry (a sum paid by the bri?'s parents to the g
envoy to the Duke, who takes him into an un?t? ?a ?ber in order to ?
money. The main part of the poem tell? ?e ?tr? ?f an unhappy marriag?
beautiful young woman. He im?'?? ?s? ?.as unfaithful to him and comp
enough gratitude to him ?? ?th? ?.?t of a nine-hundred-years-old-name'
for having her m?.?? ?.

Form

The poem is a **dramatic monologue**, a single, unbroken speech where Browning's interest is less in narrative action than in using language to reveal the character of the speaker. It is typical of the genre in its use of **irony**: precisely those features of language which the speaker thinks make him seem powerful and authoritative are those which reveal his underlying weakness and vanity. It is written in **rhyming couplets** of **iambic pentameter**.

Structure

The poem begins with the Duke inviting the listener (of whom more later) to admire the portrait of his 'last Duchess', painted by a famous artist (Fra Pandolf – see **Setting**). He appears to be answe? ?, a question about a peculiar quality of the Duchess'? ?? ?n? ? glance' (see line 13 – 'not the first / Are you to t? ? as? ?hus.') In lines 13–21 he offe? portrait sitting itself, where he ?r ?.?? ?he painter's flirtatious remarks 'calle? Duchess' cheek'. From ?r ? ?? ?.?e Duke lists his complaints about the Duche? letting her "? ?g? ?,where'. In his view she failed to distinguish between ? favour' and ? ?hundred-years-old name' and inconsequential trifles such as ? beautiful sun?e?. Halfway through line 34 he breaks off his narrative and begins t? ordering her death, saying he refuses to 'stoop' to the level of chiding his wife. H? infidelity in line 44 and then states that he 'gave commands; / Then all smiles sto? argue this may imply he bundled his wife off to a nunnery, but the most likely ex? killed. The poem concludes with an abrupt shift back to the present matter of fir? Duke's next marriage to the Count's daughter. In lines 49–53 the Duke sets appe? munificence' (reputation for generosity), though he claims his chief motivation is ? not the fortune she will bring him. The final four lines see the two characters lea? return to the public world in the chamber below, and the Duke draws the envoy'? statue, 'cast in bronze'.

There is a certain irony to the structure of the poem, whic? ?? ?elf resembles a po? the beginning and end *frame* the image of the Du?? ? ? ? ?sei?. The frame contr? achieving what the Duke could not while ?h? ? ?s ?.?e.

Identity

In this **dra**? ?o? ?.?u? Browning seeks to create a believable character, an? **and lexical** ??? ?s of natural speech.
- Deixis: the poem begins with a **deictic expression**, 'That's my last Duchess p? the poem in the world of natural speech. 'That's' is only meaningful if we im? painting. Deictic utterances are a form of shorthand, especially in spoken la? them meaningful. The poem is full of such remarks.
- Pauses: the dashes in lines 22, 31, 32 and 36 suggest the Duke is pausing, a ?

Time: ?
surrou?
brief r?
Place: ?
for dis?
of an i?
People
charac?
envoy ?
appe??
person?
Events
in this ?
insecur?

- The Duke uses **parataxis** (placing short, independent clauses next to each ot[...] authority; see lines 2–4:

> I call
> That piece a wonder, now: Fra Pandolf's hands
> Worked busily a day, and there she stands

The **compression** of **narrative time** is emphasised by the Duke reducing the [...] technical function through the use of metonymy [...] ds standing for the a[...]

- Rhythm and pace: Browning creates the imp[...] of the Duke changing pa[...] phrase lengths. The parenthesis [...] [...]–10 implies a slowing down in the [...] asserting his control of [...] [...] and his power over the listener.
- Emphasis on fir[...] person **pronouns**: the poem uses first-person pronouns su[...] times, [...] [...] times and 'mine' once, all emphasising the Duke's self-centre[...]
- 'Holding [...] floor' through the use of enjambment. Note how few lines in th[...] implying continuous speech, impeding any interjection from the listener.
- **Concrete nouns** predominate in this poem, emphasising the Duke's materia[...] varies is in lines 49–53, where the Duke's evasiveness is underscored throug[...] 'munificence' and 'pretence'.
- Repetition: the Duke repeats some terms in deliberately emphatic style, and [...] **irony** (see below). Some important examples include:
  - 'Spot of joy' – note the juxtaposition of 'spot', connoting sickness and p[...]
  - 'Smile' (also 'smiles' and 'smiled')
  - 'Stoop' (also 'stooping') twice
  - 'Fra Pandolf' (three times)

The Duke's lexis is marked by a surprising lack of **modality**: the only modal verbs [...] at the end of the poem as the Duke asserts his authori[...] [...] the listener. When [...] pretence of [his] for dowry **will be disallowed**' th[...] en[...] [...]ic modality conveys a[...] future. The absence of modality from th[...] [...] [...] the Duke's account is part of his disinterested and impersonal [...] s ju[...]ment of the Duchess's behaviour. Howe[...] **modality**, based on the [...] [...] [...]tern of expressions of desire for control, order [...]

Viewpoi[...]d audience

This poem is important in the collection for the way the reader is invited to imagine th[...] and it raises chilling questions about our complicity in the possibility of another young [...]

The **pragmatics** of the Duke's speech are revealing, and **face** is central to the Duk[...] He does everything he can to avoid **face-threatening acts** which might diminish h[...] eyes. For example, by distancing himself from the murder – he 'gave commands' [...] he had her killed – he asserts his agency and avoids the taboo of murder. On the [...] narrative with threats to the listener's face: he instructs the envoy to sit and rem[...] 'stranger' (7), both of which affect the envoy's negative face.

Key Focus – irony

Essential to any discussion of this poem is Browning's use of [...]ony. The Duke con[...] yet the impression he makes is of a weak, insecure [...] an[...]
- The Duke's choice of lexis is signific[...] h[...] [...]ats an **abstract concept** as [...] complains that the Duche[...] [...] [...]er grateful for the 'gift' of his noble n[...] betrays his innate [...] [...] [...]n.
- Wh[...] [...]ing [...] [...]y his refusal to 'stoop' (that is, to tell his wife what h[...] ima[...] onversation (lines 37–39), yet the contrast between the emot[...] pett[...]s of 'this or that' reveals how small-minded he is.
- The Duke repeatedly tries to imply his wife was unfaithful, drawing on th[...] joy' (suggestive not only of the flush of sexual arousal but also the sympt[...] her 'smile'. Yet none of these are evidence that she was actually unfaithf[...]

- The Duke even keeps a portrait hidden behind curtains, as if he is afraid ⬚
  after her death'. His pride in the verb phrase 'I have drawn' belies the fe⬚
- When the Duke shifts the conversation to the subject of money, his **regis**⬚
  he narrates how and why he had his wife killed (lines 35–47) the **lexis** is ⬚
  frequently very short, usually with at least two in each line. However, fr⬚
  the Duke speaks in much more elevated lexis, drawing on **Latinate** vocab⬚
  structures to project an aura of controlled calm ⬚⬚⬚⬚ ⬚o suggesting he is ⬚
  spontaneously, but instead falling back o⬚ ⬚a⬚ ⬚h⬚⬚sed performance. Ye⬚ ⬚
  undermines him: the return of s⬚⬚⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚n⬚⬚te nouns in line 53 ('self', '⬚
  fascination with a wom⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚⬚

Settings

Browning e⬚⬚⬚es the setting of an Italian Renaissance castle in two ways. He ⬚
name 'Ferra⬚⬚ a city in north-east Italy, which is strongly associated with the art⬚
power of the end of the sixteenth century. He refers to two artists in the poem – ⬚
Innsbruck. Both are fictional, but their names recall real artists of the period, suc⬚
Lippi ('Fra' is the Italian for 'brother', indicating that these artists were members ⬚
Renaissance was a time when art flourished across Europe, and powerful men co⬚
their homes and churches with monumental artworks intended to impress and a⬚
seems that Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara from 1533–1597, was the inspiratio⬚
purpose of this setting is not to deal with a specific historical figure. Rather, it is ⬚
the nature of power, and the role art plays in supporting and undermining powe⬚

The setting is also significant in supporting the poem's irony. The final statue, a br⬚
horse' may seem to the Duke to be an apt representation of an overwhelmingly p⬚
own might. However, a seahorse is a tiny, harmless creature, which to tame is neit⬚

The Duke uses the painting to stage a drama f⬚r t⬚e ⬚ ⬚y⬚ he 'puts by' the curta⬚
the tale begins. The Duke acts as the d⬚⬚ ⬚⬚⬚ ⬚ the drama, as Shaw puts it, to 're⬚
domestic life in the form most ⬚ ⬚ter⬚ ⬚⬚to his producer's ego'.[4] Part of the irony ⬚
the way he handles the ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ x ⬚tne tale, compressing narrative time so much t⬚
envoy's sta⬚⬚⬚⬚n ⬚ ⬚⬚⬚ker is emphasised by the Duke reminding him he is a 's⬚
Duke explic⬚⬚⬚⬚es his dramatic intentions: he 'said / Frá Pandolf *by design*' (6⬚ ⬚
calculated the effect of this illustrious name. The Duke is willing to break a centra⬚
politeness – Grice's **maxim of quality**, whereby participants in a conversation ex⬚
from the other speaker. Where one speaker admits to a specific strategy, the ma⬚
assert his power more strongly.

Lastly, **deixis** functions to establish the geography of the castle, as the Duke uses ⬚
and 'down' (54), reminding the listener that the Duke considers himself above ot⬚
exists in an unreality of his own construction.

There is another aspect to the narrative space of the poem, which is that Browni⬚
alien and other to his expected readership, but still uncomfortably close to home⬚
Ferrara is home, to an English reader in Browning's time⬚ ⬚ ⬚⬚ s both very distant ⬚
hand, it represents a far-off land, and a barbarou⬚ ⬚u⬚⬚ ⬚r⬚ ⬚hich treated human ⬚⬚
but on the other, the ideals of Renaiss⬚⬚⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ we⬚⬚ held up as being noble and ⬚
in London, founded 20 years b⬚⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚⬚ng wrote the poem, prized art such a⬚
This lends the voice bot⬚⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚⬚⬚⬚nce and an unsettling immediacy.

Time

The poem has a frame narrative in the present around the main narrative in the ⬚
Duke offers few **discourse markers** to help the envoy understand the progressio⬚
Browning wants to imply the Duke has a fairly shaky grasp of the facts himself. T⬚

---

[4] Shaw, W David, *The Dialectical Temper*, Cornell, 1968, 94

most of the poem is narrated in the **simple past** tense, but in line 35 the Duke in⬛
criticisms to his wife, and he shifts to the **subjunctive**, building up an extended c⬛
skill … which I have not … and if she let herself be lessoned … even then there w⬛

Sound

The poem's rhyming couplets are often subordinated to the enjambment, creati⬛
poem should be read. The Duke's discussion of the do⬛ ⬛ ⬛table for the prep⬛
evoking the slipperiness of his untrustworthy r⬛o ⬛l ⬛ ⬛ass at this point. More⬛
displays phonological patterning abse⬛⬛ ⬛o ⬛ ⬛ rest of the poem: the alliterati⬛
'munificence' (49), /p/ in 'am⬛⬛' ⬛nd ⬛ ⬛e⬛nse' (50), and /d/ in 'dowry' and 'dis⬛
has been prepared i⬛ ⬛ ⬛ ⬛, ⬛⬛d the implied internal rhyme of 'fair' and 'self' ⬛
the crude d⬛⬛⬛ f⬛ ⬛⬛ney.

Key Terms

Abstract and concrete nouns	abstract nouns refer to ideas and concepts; concrete nou⬛ can be experienced directly through the senses.
Deixis	lexis whose meaning depends wholly on the context – e.g⬛ uttered, e.g. 'Look at that man over there' (where 'over th⬛ spatial context of the utterance).
Maxim of quality	the rule of conversation whereby each participant assumes⬛
Narrative time	the speed at which the reader perceives time passing in t⬛ compressed, so the reader feels that time is passing very⬛ reader feels time has slowed down or even stopped.
Parataxis	placing short, independent clauses next to each other.
Register	the lexical and phonological mark⬛⬛ ⬛r formality. In Eng⬛ typically is a marker for hi⬛⬛⬛ re⬛⬛ter language.

Comprehens⬛⬛ ⬛ ⬛ ⬛⬛ns

1. ⬛ ⬛s ⬛ ⬛⬛ke speaking to the envoy?
2. ⬛ is the conversation taking place?
3. ⬛⬛at gifts did the Duke give his wife? What gifts did others give her⬛
4. What is implied by the Duke's statement, 'I gave commands / And all⬛
5. Which god is represented on the statue pointed out by the Duke at th⬛

Individual Activities

1. Identify five deictic utterances from this poem and 'fill in' the informat⬛
2. Compare the effect of the different pauses in the poem. How do they⬛ state? Are there any other parts of the poem where Browning implies⬛ dash?
3. Imagine you are the envoy reporting back to the Count, who wishes t⬛ Duke's trustworthiness. In your report you should comment on the Duke⬛ may give cause for doubts about his character.
4. Research pictures of the interior of the Castell⬛ ⬛ ⬛nse in Ferrara. W⬛ display on the walls and ceilings? How ⬛⬛ ⬛s ⬛ ⬛ in⬛erior contrast with⬛ to your understanding of Browni⬛ ⬛ ⬛ ⬛m⬛⬛ts on the function of art i⬛
5. Is Grice's maxim of qu⬛⬛⬛ ⬛ e ⬛ ⬛y maxim which the Duke breaks? R⬛ where else he b⬛⬛ ⬛ G⬛⬛ ⬛⬛n maxims.
6. Take an ⬛⬛ ⬛ ⬛ ⬛ ⬛ where the Duke seeks to protect his own face in⬛ ⬛ly ⬛ ⬛⬛ncerns motivating his speech at that point.
7. ⬛n example of where the Duke's speech threatens the envoy's ne⬛ ⬛⬛s threatening. What does your revised version reveal about the Du⬛
8. **AS only:** Compare how Browning uses domestic settings to create a d⬛ Duchess' and 'Porphyria's Lover'.
9. **A Level only:** Examine the ways that Browning presents power in this⬛ collection.

Group Activities

1. Read the poem in pairs. The first time through, read line by line. The se[...] mark to punctuation mark. The final time read it sentence by sentence[...] you notice and what different ideas are suggested?

2. Which parts of the Duke's speech seem to have been prepared in ad[...] spontaneous, and how does Browning's use of language convey this? V[...] statements which betray a momentary loss of cont[r]ol or the operation [...] strategy.

3. Where do you think the Duke beg[in]s [to lose] control of his narrative? V[...] possible answers to this q[...][...][...] discuss how Browning's use of le[x...] influenced your de[...][...]on.

4. Look at the [portr]a[it] o[f] [L]ucrezia de' Medici by Bronzino (reproduced b[...] [...][...]re [...][...]pose convey the image she wants to project.

5. [...]ly: Compare the opening line of this poem to the opening of 'P[...] [...][...]er which conveys a more imposing sense of strength. One perso[...] and the other for the speaker in 'Prospice'.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do we have art in our homes and our public buildings? Are ever[y...]

2. How do you judge the quality of a work of art? How do you judge its value? Are they necessarily the same?

3. Is the job of the artist to be truthful or to produce something beautiful?

4. Does knowing that a work of art was created on commission (i.e. the artist had to create a piece for a specific person and representing a specific subject) change how you view it?

5. How has Browning used his poem to engage with the questions above?

Connections

- Obsession and arrogance: 'Joh[...][...] A[...][...]la', 'Porphyria's Lover'
- Murder: 'The Laborato[ry...]
- Madnes[s]: [P]or[phyria's L]over'
- Relati[...][...] '[M]eeting at Night', 'De Gustibus—'

2. The Lost Leader

Summary

A little context is needed to make sense of this poem. William Wordswort[h]
of the **Romantic** movement in Britain, as famous f[or] [hi]s radical politics a[nd]
ported the French Revolution, rejected conv[enti]on [a]n[d] Christianity and cha[nge]
as he grew older, he turned away fro[m] [th]e [li]b[e]ral views and supported t[he]
ing, and a great many young [poet]s [th]is was deeply troubling: Wordswort[h]
end of the eighteenth [cent]ury [ar]guing in his *Lyrical Ballads* that it shoul[d]
guage of [the] [comm]on [m]a[n] [and] [ur]g[in]g that poets should engage with society, not retre[at]
Browning [expres]s[e]s the shock and anger felt by the poets of his generatio[n]
had turn[ed] [his] back on them. However, it should not simply be read as a p[o]
Browning takes care to anonymise the 'leader' so that the poem expresses [a]

Another note of context is that Browning was living through a period of [a]
France had undergone a decade of revolutionary turmoil from 1789–179[9]
ing agitation for unity, justice and freedom following the Hambach Fest[i]
drawing on this sentiment in 'The Lost Leader', which he wrote in 1845, [a]

Form

The poem is arranged in two stanzas of **dactylic tetrameter**, each
16 lines long. Lines 1–8 of the first stanza are rhymed ABABCDCD,
but for the remainder of the stanza only alternate lines are
rhymed, perhaps to avoid the poem sounding unnatural due to an
excessively burdensome rhyme scheme. Only the first fo[ur] [lin]es of
the second stanza are rhymed ABAB, the rest rhym[ing] X[Y]X[Y], etc.

Structure

The poem begins with a [serie]s [of] [ac]cusations levelled at the
leader who [has] [ab]ar[doned] his followers: he has been corrupted
by money a[nd] [the] attraction of 'ribbons' to wear showing his
social prestig[e]. [F]rom line 7 the speaker turns to the behaviour of
the followers, stressing their self-sacrifice and poverty, and
emphasising the sense of loss they feel that they are no longer safe
in his 'magnificent eye'. Lines 13–14 list famous poets of English
literary history who would, according to the speaker, have
supported their cause, and the stanza ends with two military
metaphors: the leader no longer leads, but has fallen to the back of
the march of progress, now no better than a 'slave'.

The second stanza begins with a series of statements of intent,
where the speaker motivates his audience to believe they can still
'march on' and continue the fight. He contrasts their aspiratic[n]s to
the leader, who now tells people to 'crouch' (i.e. bow [do]w[n] [t]o
authority). Lines 22–24 has the speaker artic[u]l[a]te [h]i[s] [an]ger at the
failure of the leader to make the mo[st] [of] hi[s] [p]o[t]ential: a path is left
'untrod' and instead devils '[th]r[oug]h' [it] [c]orrupting a once-good man.
Lines 25–29 m[ar]k a [n]e[w] [d]e[f]iance as the speaker rejects the
possibility [o]f [the] [le]ad[er] returning to his followers, fearing the
'forced prai[se]' [and] 'doubt, hesitation and pain' which they would feel
if he came back. Line 30 is highly **elliptical**, and consequently hard to
decipher, but it is a challenge directed *to* the leader, daring him to risk
fighting against their courage before they, united, defeat him alone. The final tw[o]
redemption, the possibility that the leader will have understood his errors and, a[s]
followers in heaven.

Time: non-[
around the[
cluding a f[
events are [
Place: no s[
sal feeling[
People an[
an unident[i
named Lea[
group of t[
Events: de[
sise the di[s
serving ac[
tegrity of [

Wo[r

Voice and identity

This poem self-consciously evokes the **rhetorical** power of the great speeches of
seek to reproduce the effects of spontaneous speech, but to convey something of
addressing a crowd of his supporters. Notable stylistic features include:

- Insistent use of **alliteration** as an emphatic device
- Parallelisms and antitheses. The poem relies on a great many pairs of contra
  implies a particular rhetorical point:
  - 'Found the one gift of which fortune be, ift ... / Lost all the others she
    that the Leader has found which Fortune never gave to his follo
    gifts his followers co e l .e the religious connotations of 'devote'.
  - 'they that h n to give, *doled him out* silver' drawing on the differe
    'c ', .e latter suggesting charity and pity, as well as a rather imp
    dis ed.
  - 'Still bidding *crouch* whom the rest bade *aspire*' (20), juxtaposing the la
    the revolutionary spirit of 'aspire'.
  - 'One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels' (23) juxtaposing 'triu
  - 'the glimmer of twilight, / Never glad confident morning again.' (28–29
    connotations of the two metaphors, one for despair, the other for joy.
- **Allusions** to biblical and classical literature
  - The 'handful of silver' (1) alludes to the story of Judas, who betrayed Cl
    silver. The implication is that the Leader has sold his soul for the basest
  - The 'lyre' in line 18 alludes to the tradition of poets in ancient Greece a
    accompanying themselves on a small harp called a *lyre*
  - Line 21 ('Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more') draws hea
    this sense means 'erase', and it is common in the Bible in prayers as a n
    something painful, such as the memory of past cf. Psalms 69:28).
    dynamic verbs marks this as the climax e m.
- **Appeals** to **authorities** such as Shak , ton, Burns and Shelley – far
  were noted for their radic , nt e ishment views.
- Deliberate modula n , positions to convey political relationships thro
  - 'S e : s **of** us, Milton was **for** us, / Burns, Shelley were **with** u
    'o oved through the more active 'for' and into the immediacy of
    ad cing these names in support of the argument.
- Personification of concepts such as Fortune (3) as a woman.
- Use of **imperatives** in lines 29–30 as a call to action: 'strike', 'menace' (in th
- The whole task is framed in **biblical and religious** terms, as if this transcend
- Where the speaker uses **repetition** it is for rhetorical effect, with the poem'
  anaphora of 'one more' repeated five times in three lines (22–24).

Viewpoint and people

As is typical of many persuasive speeches, the **grammar** in this speech makes car
the audience's reaction. The Leader himself is not named, only referred to as 'he
allows Browning to make this poem about more than just his own experiences of
Wordsworth's political apostasy. It also dramatises a i where the audien
speaker is talking about without the speaker n ec ne ame names, creating a
understanding based on the assump h e reader will share the speaker's
the **first-person plural** 'We' th t, evoking the fraternity and unity of the n
speaker also refers t a ar ed 'they' (**third-person plural**) in the early part o
implication a up of powerful, wealthy individuals have corrupted Word
and silver, w is original followers had only copper. The effect is to create a
tool when trying to urge others to action, as having someone (or something) to f
rise up. However, leaving the enemy unnamed makes them seem more powerfu
The poem, therefore, serves a dual **illocutionary** purpose: it is at once an accoun
and his followers and also a call to arms to continue the fight even after the lead

Key Focus – metonymy

Browning makes frequent use of metonymy in his semantic choices in this poem
ideas concisely in order to sustain the pace of the poem, and secondly because o
particular ideas.

- 'riband to stick on his coat' (2) – 'riband' is a metonym for an honour bestov
- 'copper' is a metonym for low-value coins (the writer could have said 'penn
- 'mild and magnificent eye' (10) – 'eye' is a metor   r ne Leader himself,
  watched and cared for which the speaker 'e s   have lost.
- 'the van and the freemen … rea   t   s.aves' (15–16); all metonyms for a
  'vanguard', the small f   s   rs who go ahead of an army to scout the

Settings

The poem av   specific references to any geographical setting or period of the
sense that this poem expresses universal values: the rejection of slavery and abj
justice and the rejection of corruption.

Time

Lines 1–9 are all in the **simple past**, and the bluntness of 'left' (1) emphasises the
experienced by the speaker when the leader rejected his followers. At line 9 the
('We that *had loved* him), which indicates a now-finished period of time and crea
movement through the use of **asyndeton**. The stanza concludes in the **present**, c
and isolation as he 'sinks to the rear and the slaves'. The second stanza looks to t
of boulomaic **modal auxiliaries** in lines 17–19: 'We *shall* march' … 'songs *may* ins
(note, too, the introduction of the **passive voice** in 'will be done', implying an ine
progress). Having set up a vision of the future, the mood shift to the **imperative**
'record'. This continues through to the end, as the sp   gines the possibili
Leader rediscovering his true allegiances in th d   n   iodal construction 'let h

Sound and prosody

This poem is   in   ning's choice of prosodics. He uses **dactylic tetram**
first syllabl   h   ne. This gives the poem a powerful sense of dynamic energ
public orato   ost of the lines are catalectic – they omit the final two weak syl
speaker to build to a climax in each line. Some lines include an extra weak syllab
poem's chief rhetorical effects is achieved through the use of **caesura**, such as in
disrupts the rhythm of the line and creates the impression of defiant anger.

Lastly, the poem is rich in **alliteration**, often used for almost theatrical effect. Lin
and 'give' as a contrast to the negative connotations of 'doled'. It also serves to c
his eye is 'mild' and 'magnificent' (10), conveying a gentleness to balance his imp

Key Terms

Allusion	a reference to a well-known story or idea.
Appeal to authority	adding weight to your argum y uggesting a famou same beliefs as you.
Asyndeton	omitting con ct uch as 'and' between clauses.
Dactylic tetrameter	each con s ts of four groups of three syllables, the f t tl following two weak.
Epistroph	a rhetorical technique where successive clauses end in
Metonym	the use of a small part of a larger object to represent th a prisoner might be 'behind bars', where the bars are a whole.
Rhetoric	the art of using language to sway an audience, often as devices such as anaphora and pathos.

Comprehension Questions

1. What, in the speaker's view, motivated the lost leader to abandon his
2. Who are 'They', referred to in line 5?
3. What was the 'great language' (11) which the Leader's followers learn
4. What is the 'van' in line 15?
5. Put line 19 into your own words.
6. Why does the speaker believe another soul has b en 'lost' (line 21)?
7. Why does the speaker refuse to let the le   e rn to his former fol

Individual Activities

1. Research Word   ews on poetry and politics (*https://www.poe*
   wor sw   place to start). What do you think Browning wou
              hi   jection of radicalism?
2.   ch Milton, Burns and Shelley. Why do you think the speaker ref
3. Choose an example of colour imagery in this poem and discuss the co
   colour and how it conveys an aspect of the speaker's consciousness.
4. Choose a point in the poem where Browning interrupts the metre. Who
5. Identify one example of epistrophe or anaphora in this poem which co
   feeling. Write a paragraph explaining how Browning achieves this ef
6. **AS only**: Compare how Browning presents powerful feelings in this po
7. **A Level only**: Examine how Browning conveys feelings of loss in this p
   collection.

Group Activities

1. Practise scansion by annotating stresses: a line drawn above a syllabl
   foot; ˘ indicates a weak foot. Compare it to another Browning poem,
   Last Duchess', and discuss the different effects created by Browning's
2. Which matters more: sound or imagery? In pairs,   bate which is more
   phonology or visual imagery and connota
3. Read the poem in pairs, changing   er   ch conjunction. What d
   and effects?
4. **AS only**: With a p t er,   re the ending of this poem (beginning
   ending of 'Pr   down similarities and differences, focusing
         lo   discuss which is more powerful in conveying personal

Discussion Questions

1. Has Browning made the poem's effect more or less powerful by remov
   Wordsworth?
2. How convincing do you find the speaker's message in the poem? Is this
   desperate attempt to hold on to something slipping away?
3. Discuss the view that this is one of Browning's 'best known, if not actual
4. Where are all the women in this poem? Does it matter to you that the
5. Does the language of this poem seem spontaneous or pre-planned? R
   your answer.
6. This poem is both visually and aurally powerful, but which is most effe
   ideas?
7. Discuss a modern political, social or literary context where a speaker
   poem.

Connections

- Rejection and a   yria's Lover', 'Cristina'
- Pow   L   chess'
- Life a   ath: 'Prospice', 'De Gustibus—'

3. The Laboratory

Summary

A woman is planning to murder her love rival, so she visits the secret labor... makes the poison for her, she recounts the events w... have driven her t... describes her fantasies of using the poison or ... e ... nies.

Form

This is a **dramatic monologue**, but unlike other monologues such as 'Johannes Agricola' and 'My Last Duchess', it is set out in twelve stanzas. The division of the stanzas helps delineate the speaker's changing thoughts.

Style

The prosodics of the poem make some attempt to mimic natural speech here, including some use of **deixis**. The poem requires the reader to do a good deal of work **inferring** the events which have led up to this moment, as well as the relationships between the characters of the provocative but deliberately hazy sketch of events outside the poisoner's laborat... within the room is full of rich, sensuous detail. In this poem, Browning achieves a... **intensity** (*in linguistics, 'intensity' describes the extent to which a speaker's use* ... that deviates from neutrality).

The use of deixis in the poem helps contribute to ... ...tic quality, creating a ... a physical environment. For example, 've... ... o... ... all' (36) suggests she is hol... examining it.

Time: won...
in the pres...
imagines t...

Place: Got...
Régime Fr...

People an...
addresses...
relationshi...

Events: re...
imagined...

Structure and ...

The poem o... ...vo parallel narratives, a double journey taking place within the laboratory and without. The first stanza establishes the scene in the laboratory as the speaker helps the poisoner into his protective mask and gown. The second stanza sets up two new characters, only referred to as 'he' and 'her', but the **generic conventions** of discourses of love rivalries make the statement 'he is with her' far more meaningful than the simple **monosyllabic** lexis denotes. The third and fourth stanzas focus chiefly on the laboratory itself, though the speaker's thoughts drift back to the world of the royal court for a moment. In the fifth and sixth stanzas, the speaker imagines the future, picturing the power she would possess carrying 'pure death in ... earring, a casket...' (19). From this point ... ...s, present action and future fanta... ...ec ... ...ore and more closely blended. ... a ... ...opment in the manufactur... ...e ... ...prompts another exclamatio... ...he speaker. The final stanza of the poem returns... to the present, as the speaker offers to pay the poisoner with both gold and her own body.

Madame de Bri...
poisoning her brot...
a source f...

Viewpoint and characters

The speaker is a woman (one of only two female narrators in this collection), and
interesting questions about **gender** and **gendered language** in this poem. The idea
murder is particularly shocking because of the cultural expectations of femininity.
The speaker's obsessive character is emphasised throughout the poem. The seco
constructed of very simple lexis, but the repetition of 'know' in 'they know that I
even a delight in her plans. However, the repetition of "a h in line 8 changes th
defensive and truculent as Browning unfolds a sir gle across a series of incom
they laugh at me having fled…' (7) is th b at Browning breaks it into three se
repetition of a word (similar to adi sis in rhetorical language, but fulfilling a d
simple sentence 'I am h ' concludes the stanza with a boldness contained with
'here'.

A significant element of this poem is the speaker's dual existence in a real world a
through **deontic modality** in lines such as 'Elise, with her head / And her breast a
should drop dead!' (24). The necessity of Elise's death to restore the speaker's se
drives the overwhelming desire to commit murder.

Key Focus – sensuality and sex

This poem is striking in the ways Browning creates a distinctively 'female' voice (
this is not a realistic voice for a woman, but that Browning emphasises certain qu
associated with the feminine in cultural terms).

- Lexis associated with sensuality and sex
  - The speaker is not only excited by the prospect of avenging her rejectio
    sexually aroused by the whole process
  - The smoke 'curls' (2) in a sensuous way, and the antic field of white
  - The speaker admires the 'gold oozings' ( ), ar her highly sexualised i
  - The poem concludes with the s reaching an intense peak of arou
    and her body to the verb 'gorge' (45) implies violence an
    offers her mo p of the body connoting sensuality and erotic ple
  - T no the opening two lines is dominated by open, long vow
    (' sk'), /eɪ/ ('gaze') and /aʊ/ ('smokes'), contributing to the imp
    expressive, unrestrained and sensual.
- Hysteria and breathlessness
  - 'Hysteria' is a highly gendered term, implying that a woman has lost co
    seems to present a woman almost growing hysterical at points, which B
    and sentence structures. His use of **polysyndeton** in lines 23–24 implie
    speaker imagines killing the beautiful Elise. Browning also uses **asyndet**
    20.
- Euphony
  - In conventional literary depictions, a woman's voice should be soft and
    euphony (combinations of phonologically pleasing lexis) to suggest this
    'yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue', where the **assonance** of 'yonder
    contributes to the tone. Note that Browning en line on an open vo
    to the voice appropriate to conventiona of a seductress.
- Male gender roles in the narrative
  - The (presumably male) ois is ordered to 'grind away, moisten and
    These three v s, th tensely physical, can be read as having highly se
    th an of science and chemistry, as well as the dynamic verb
    m d pestle, where the pestle can be read as a phallic symbol (it
    'pizzle', an old term for a bull's penis). However, the use of the **imperat**
    female speaker, not the poison-maker, and it is worth noting how the s
    pragmatic considerations of politeness or implicature: she describes ev
    great detail (quite unlike the Duke in 'My Last Duchess', for example).

Settings

Some editions of the poem preface it with '*Ancien Régime*' to indicate the period
centuries or so before the French Revolution (1789–1799). It calls to mind kings
'Sun King', whose fabulous wealth allowed them to construct extravagant palaces
courts surrounding those kings were also known for their intrigue, corruption and
population of France struggled to survive in grinding poverty. As is typical of Brow
the intention is not to recreate a realistic scene, but to use the setting to evoke a
mind works.

Browning doesn't name any specifically real locations in the poem, but he does
with French **etymologies** to reinforce the sense that this is a somewhat exotic loc

- 'phial' – a small bottle, from Old French *fiole*.
- 'casket' – a small case, from Middle French *casset.*
- 'signet' (20) – a small seal (such as one set on a ring and used to stamp the w
  French *signet*.
- 'filigree' (20) – delicate patterns created by twisting wires together, from se
  filigrane.
- 'lozenge' (21) – a piece of jewellery in the shape of a rhombus, from Old Fre
- 'minion' (29) – in this sense, the term is from the Middle French *mignon*, me
  attractive little woman. The speaker is *not* bright yellow and wearing dunga

The immediate setting of the laboratory itself draws on conventions of **Gothic** w
speaker uses the **metaphor** of a 'devil's-smithy' (a smithy is a blacksmith's works
place), and the 'faint smokes' recall the corruption of science found in many Got
Frankenstein.

Sound

The poem is immensely rich in its sound palette. **Alliteration** appears in almost e
particular emotional arousal (cf. line ... in ... g many others). The **metre** of the p
tetrameter, but Browning introduces considerable variation. Take the first two li
are marked in bold:

> No..., ...ng thy **glass** mask **tightly**,
> May...thro' these **faint** smokes **curling** whitely,

The first two feet of the first line are dactyls (strong-weak-weak) but then the me
ambiguous: should 'mask' be given the same stress as 'glass'? If so, this presents
spondee followed by a **trochee** (see **List of Metrical Feet** on page 68, and even if
by two **trochees** creates a shifting, uneasy effect on the reader. All this contribute
even deranged speaker.

The final stanza of the poem marks the culmination of the speaker's murderous
hard consonants such as /g/ ('gorge gold'), /b/ ('brush' ... 'brings'). It contrasts w
poem's *opening*, and emphasises the change which has taken place within this ch
progressed.

Key Terms

|	
Anadiplosis	the repetition of a word (or phrase) from the previo sentence at the beginning of the next.
Asyndeton	...es... clauses not linked or coordinated by any conju
Euphony	combinations of phonologically pleasing lexis.
Gothic	a literary genre particularly concerned with violence, dea transgressive behaviour.
Linguistic intensity	the extent to which a speaker's attitude towards a concep might be marked, for example, by emotive language.
Polysyndeton	using more conjunctions than would normally occur.

Comprehension Questions

1. Where is the speaker in the poem?
2. Who has she been rejected by?
3. Which other women are named in the poem, and what is their relev
4. Why does the speaker object to the colour of the poison? What col
5. Does the woman want the poisoning to remain undetected?
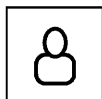
Individual Activities

1. Try rewriting part or all of the en. t with a male protagonist. H
   language, and what r al about Browning's choices?
2. Research the tir of Gothic writing, and in particular the pre
   fic ior v pr do you find it to read the poem as a 'Gothic te
3. ea. paintings and images associated with the court of Louis XIV
   ers such as Watteau, Hyacinthe Rigaud and Charles Lebrun, as
   Palace of Versailles. How do these help you understand Browning's
   the reign of the 'Sun King'?
4. Write a paragraph discussing Browning's use of caesura in this poem
   particularly revealing of the speaker's emotional state. If possible, s
   chosen contributes to Browning's use of irony in the poem.
5. Write a paragraph on Browning's use of exclamatory sentences in t
   think is of particular structural significance in marking a change in th
6. **AS only:** Compare and contrast how Browning creates a vivid sense
   Thoughts from Abroad'.
7. **A Level only:** Examine how Browning presents desire in this poem a

Group Activities

1. What are the generic conventions of love rivalry tales? What examp
   as a group?
2. What makes women's language differe e 's? Using your know
   discuss how thinking about gend s ap our response to the poem
3. Draw a timeline of the n i, icn you consider not only past – p
   the different che ers other people are.
4. With a p u ate the prosody of one stanza and look for p
   d. re. Why has he chosen to change the poem's metre
5. nly: Reread lines 33–36 and then look at lines 10–19 of 'Porp
   ner how Browning presents the experience of watching and look

Discussion Questions

1. Is this a misogynistic poem?
2. Which detail in the poem do you find most shocking? Refer closely t
3. How far is the speaker to blame for the murders she intends to carr
   justifications or mitigating factors in her defence?
4. In many ways this poem seems **melodramatic** – full of excessive em
   heartbeats. Yet is it any more than mere melodrama? If so, what de
   here?

Connections

- Murder: 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lo er'
- Obsession: 'Porphyria's Lover' st
- Memory and desire: T ughts, from Abroad', 'Cristina'
- Relationships 'H g at Night', 'Parting at Morning'
- Gen rp.yria's Lover', 'Cristina'

4. Cristina

Summary

This is a philosophically complex poem which meditates on the nature of l⟩ the eyes of a man who for a moment felt he shared a bond with a beautiful ⟩ moment he fell in love with her, and he wonders ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ t the same conne⟩ if she loved him, yet he consoles himself w⟨th⟩ th⟨⟩ ⟨⟩a that, though she has ⟩ (one, he admits, which may offer '⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨s' and 'deeper blisses' (43–44)⟩ forever, thinking he posses⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ until they are reunited after death.

Browning ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ to the idea of the lover who was so caught up in t⟩ could not ⟨⟩ the reality of their relationship. In love poetry, lovers ofte⟩ transfixed ⟨⟩ even transformed by their beloved's gaze, and Browning take⟩ concealing Cristina's side of the story so the focus falls on the obsessive – ⟨⟩ himself. The poem asks questions about how we interpret others' actions, ⟨⟩ ignorance is better than open-eyed misery.

Form

Browning sets out this **monologue** in eight stanzas of **trochaic tetrameter**. The rhyme scheme is such that the even-numbered lines of each stanza are unrhymed, while the odd-numbered lines are rhymed AABB.

Style

Browning achieves a high degree of linguistic intensity in ⟨⟩ poem through lexis, syntax and prosodic features ⟨⟩ h⟨⟩ ly concise in places and syntactically compl⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ lines 18–19, where 'Sure tho' seldom' is a ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ way of saying, 'Though I accept that th⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ occur'. The speaker's emotional intensity an⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ent are reinforced in the high degree of **subordinat⟨⟩** ⟨⟩ characterises much of the poem's diction. See **Key Issue** ⟨⟩low for more on the use of parenthesis.

Structure

The first stanza relates the speaker's memories of the moment his gaze met Cris⟨⟩ is different to those men who are not transformed by her gaze. In the second sta⟨⟩ objection to the idea that 'her look meant nothing' (9), claiming it could must ha⟨⟩ expressed in bad poetic clichés (which he gives in inverted commas). The third st⟨⟩ that there are moments when the human spirit rises out of its usual condition of ⟨⟩ capable of heroic action and shows its true self ('endowments' (20)). The fourth ⟨⟩ series of images of fires being started, suggesting that heroic love such as the spe⟨⟩ becoming 'the sole work of a life-time' and making 'piled-up honours' and 'swoll⟨⟩ meaningless. The fifth stanza applies this idea to the mome⟨⟩ his gaze met Cristi⟨⟩ have experienced the **transcendental** power of lov⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ se⟨⟩ond as their souls⟨⟩ introduces the idea that this moment mark⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ beginning and an ending. S⟨⟩ back on the 'love-bliss' (45) he bel⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ in that second. In the seventh sta⟨⟩ public shame and 'derision' ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ed when others saw how he felt. He also b⟨⟩ claiming that ⟨⟩ t ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩e the victim of the devil's scheme ('provision' (52))⟨⟩ ignorance. ⟨⟩ ⟨⟩e⟨⟩er, is divinely inspired (he possesses 'God's secret' (55), a p⟨⟩ poems wher⟨⟩ ⟨⟩acters think they possess divine knowledge that sets them apa⟨⟩ final stanza is very ambiguous. The speaker thinks that he now possesses Cristin⟨⟩ live out his life in perfect happiness. Surely this must be little more than a derang⟨⟩ that he has found bliss in a moment, and can be happy in it, and might that not b⟨⟩ life pursuing honours and ambitions?

Time: the ⟨⟩ minute' an⟨⟩
Place: the ⟨⟩ settings ex⟨⟩
People an⟨⟩ imagines ⟨⟩ She does ⟨⟩ except in ⟨⟩
Events: on⟨⟩ mulled ove⟨⟩ consequen⟨⟩

Viewpoint and identity

The speaker is a man who wants to believe that for a moment – what Browning t[...] beautiful woman experienced the feeling of their souls 'rush[ing] together' (48), [...] 'Porphyria's Lover', casts himself as the victim of forces beyond his control. The s[...] this posture of passivity, through the epistemic **modal** 'should' and the placemer[...] at the end of the line. The woman is the agent of active choice in this poem: she [...] subject of **active verbs** ('she *may* discover' (4), 'she fixed [...] 34) and 'she has lo[...] speaker, who places himself as the **object** of thes[...] Warwick Slinn charac[...] emotional credit account: Cristina's loss [...] in [...]

The speaker seeks to emb[...] spiritual superiority to other men in the poe[...] contrasts hi[...] w[...] to whom the lady 'may discover / all her soul to ... / [...] them' (4–5) [...] mes these men with **ellipses**, implying a pause as he searches [...] an effect co[...]nded by his grudging use of 'I suppose' (4). The **implication** of t[...] **infer** the speaker's true feelings about other men and his sense of superiority ov[...]

The speaker uses the **second-person singular pronoun** 'you' several times in the [...] he is addressing a real person. Rather, the tone of self-justification implies he is i[...] frame his own views. This makes the **pragmatics** of the poem interesting, as the s[...] not a real listener, and the implication is that the repeated assertions of his ratio[...] potential questions about his sanity. It would not be true to call this poem a *dra[...] specifically dramatic situation established, nor any audience beyond the reader f[...] Browning's method here is to reveal a character through his thoughts, rather tha[...] complexity that dramatic performance (albeit implied) suggests.

The speaker's insistence on his difference to others is underscored by his use of 'b[...] appears as 'But I'm not so' in line 7, establishing this speaker's oppositional relatio[...] stanza III, it marks the beginning of the poem's upward mo[...]ent as a contrastive [...] 'we're sunk here' (17). The final stanza, with its em[...]ha[...] the speaker's possess[...] this rhetorical figure, preferring 'and'[...] ates the 'next life' in which he a[...]

People and relat[...]

The Cristin[...] is not a real person, but an imaginative creation of the s[...] convention[...]ing, in which he asserts what he shares with the lady is unique[...] he 'can't tell ... What her look said' (9–10). However, he proceeds to claim he is '[...] (11) (see **Key Focus** for more on this point). Stanza III turns away from the lady a[...] speaker as he admits to being 'sunk', but also appealing to his innate desire for h[...] between 'a spirit's true endowments' and 'its false ones' (20–21). However, with[...] the 'true endowments' of her soul can only exist in the speaker's imagination. Us[...] describe the moment he saw Cristina, the speaker appeals to conventions of lov[...] masculinity in the **bellicose** ideas associated with 'flashes struck' (25) (perhaps r[...] swords) to present his perception of the transcendent moment. He also appeals [...] IV as a means of defining himself in opposition to those around Cristina: he dism[...] through the **adjectives** 'piled-up' and 'swollen' (27–28), both suggesting excess a[...] claims to have achieved 'the sole work of a life-time' (31), contrasting himself to [...] 'trifled' (32) their opportunities.

Stanza V forms the turning-point of the poem [...] t[...]ker offers what he believ[...] 'Doubt you if ... she felt clearly?' (34) [...] in [...] answer must be in the affirmativ[...] sure. The speaker seems to b[...] in [...]**tempsychosis**, imagining that the human [...] certain body, before i[...] ag[...]n' to another body after death. The **motion verb** [...] common 'fl[...]yi[...] rapid, unpredictable movement, and contrasting with the '[...] has achieve[...]oment of transcendent unity, emphasised in the **alliteration** of [...]

The speaker uses stanza VII again to assert the uniqueness in the feeling he belie[...] **projecting** an image of an alternative future for the lady. 'Else' (41) in this sense [...]

---

[5] Slinn, *Browning and the Fictions of Identity*, Barnes and Noble, 1982, 78

opportunity'. The images of 'better ends' and 'deeper blisses' (43–44) are **euphe**
'swollen' honours of stanza IV, perhaps suggesting a more charitable view of the
speculation about the future is contrasted with the emphatic deictic claim made
love-bliss' (45, my emphasis). The use of the **demonstrative pronoun** focuses the
present, the 'good minute' which the speaker believes he has experienced when
together' (48). Again the speaker uses a **rhetorical question** to assert his claim, b
suggests, perhaps, a weakening in his argument: he can fall ck only on the stre
rather than any new idea or substance.

The final stanza represents the poem m , and the moment when the speake
doubt which lurks under the re e rest of the poem. In stanza VII he clai
secret' (55) and thre n . e provision of the Devil' (52–53), achieving a **prela**
begins with nd half lines of simple statements, each following a simple St
contrasting e syntactical complexity of the rest of the poem, affirming the
image. Lines 59–60 encapsulate the whole drama of the poem: it begins in the **pr**
of bliss the speaker hopes to preserve forever), turns then to the past and then t
cycle in which he will live out the rest of his deluded days.

Settings

It has been claimed that his poem is 'about' Maria Cristina of Naples and Sicily, a
century Italy, though this adds very little to understanding the poem. Apart from
specific details of time and place. The references to 'piled-up honours' and 'worl
finds himself in a royal court. Instead, Browning focuses on **interiority** in this poe
philosophical questions in his speaker.

One aspect of setting is that of an imagined distance between grim reality and ar
There is a pattern of **orientational metaphors** in the poem presenting everyday
with *down*, whereas escape is *up*. Through this loose int e ation of place, the
celebration of retreating from the real world and sc g into the freedom of fa

Time

As is apt for a person w n to live out his whole life in a moment that is gor
rapidly bet re . and past tenses, such as in lines 7–8 in the first stanza.

The first two es of the poem reveal much about how time functions in this poe

> *She should never have looked at me*
> *If she meant I should not love her!*

The first line of the poem introduces the key event in the speaker's narrative – th
speaker – in a complex way, using the deontic **modal verb** 'should', implying a m
lady. However, by the second line, 'should' has taken on a new meaning, imputir
past tense of 'shall'. The binding together of these two meanings begins the fictio
sustain his belief that he has in some way 'captured' the lady's soul.

The speaker constructs time through a series of **deontic modal** statements in line
uncertainty of the future through 'must', 'may', and 'if you choose it', to contras
view that 'this life's end and this love's bliss / Have been ere'. This further e
that, having once exchanged a glance with Cristin li s complete (and henc
quickly' (64)).

There is a complex dual m t uture time in the poem which is worth ex
is reality: Cristina's ves on to 'better ends' and 'deeper blisses', forgett
speaker, th hi eality is a shadow of the transcendent unity experienced v
He seeks to t his life 'now', in a moment 'grown perfect' (59), as he exists
who have failed to 'capture' 'God's secret' – that is, to experience the almost rel
he describes in line 54 – he felt when Cristina looked at him. The urgency with w
and – he believes – the chance to fulfil his desires for the lady are expressed in th
with an urgent **subjunctive** 'come'. Perhaps even here, though, is an irony about

can only express a wish for the 'next life', but cannot exert any control over it, ju~~
the lady, but not experience any real knowledge of her.

The 'good minute' of this poem is expressed in a contrast between lexis suggesti~~
contrasted with lexis of fire and movement. The experience of the moment whe~~
expressed as 'sparks', 'fire-flames', 'fleeting' and 'rushing', contrasting with the l~~
sunk' (my emphasis) and the light is 'trampled out foreve~~'

Key Focus – parenthesis, ~~ ~~ ~~ion and subordination

- Ellipses and pauses
  - o Th~~ ~~id~~ ~~ing statement of the poem, marked by the modal 'sho~~
    p~~ ~~arked in lines 3 and 4, where the speaker searches for the right t~~
    wil~~ ~~in love with. In spoken language a pause may be a way of **holding t**~~
    placed in the middle of the phrase, as it allows the speaker to introduce a ~~
    concession 'you call such' (3). Is this speaker archly indicating his superiori~~
    men, or is it the other type of pause, caused by loss of fluency?
- Parenthetical clauses
  - o The second stanza contains the crucial admission of the poem, that the ~~
    Cristina's look really meant, which he follows with the **parenthetical** '(t~~
    way of regaining control and power in the monologue, as if by admittir~~
    disregards it as a potential challenge to the validity of his argument?
  - o A significant element of this stanza is the stumbling, irregular effect of l~~
    trochaic, but the **syntax**, which begins with two questions and leads in~~
    that the speaker 'can't tell' and is interrupted by the brackets, conveys ~~
    coherent view of the world. This contrasts with flue~~cy of later stanzas~~
    enjambment leads the central idea over thr~~ ~~ ~~s the speaker asse~~
    'capture[d]' (56) 'God's secret').
  - o In line 44 the speaker acce~~ ~~ ~~a ~~ ~~tina may have found 'deeper bli~~
    again deploys a p~~ ~~ ~~ti~~ ~~lause as a means of undermining the val~~
    conditiona~~ ~~ ~~ ~~h~~se it' (44) implies a degree of doubt on the spea~~
- Imagir~~ ~~er ~~ices
  - o Th~~ ~~nd stanza contains two passages in quotation marks. These are~~
    others might say that Cristina's look meant, and he dismisses them as '~~
    can denote hypocritical and sanctimonious talk, or a **sociolect** peculiar ~~
    thieves or prostitutes. Either way, it is **pejorative**). Both are **parodies** o~~
    poetry, the image of 'the bleakness / of some lone shore' (13) a pathet~~
    loneliness, and the second mocking the desire to escape from real life ~~
  - o Rhetorically, these function as something of a **straw man**, whereby the ~~
    opposing viewpoint which he can dismiss to add validity to his argume~~
- Conjunctions and logic
  - o The speaker creates complex **subordinate constructions** through the u~~
    up alternative possibilities which he can dismiss. Note the use of 'lest' (~~
    the biblical narrative of the Garden of Eden, and the~~ returns to the m~~
    participle 'making' (55). This complex synta~~ ~~ ~~n ~~ conveys the spea~~
    deluded way his mind operates.
- Stanza IV – interrupting the narr~~ ~~ ~~
  - o Stanza IV is stylistic~~ ~~ ~~d ~~ ~~ally quite different to the rest of the poen~~
    simpl~~ ~~ta~~ ~~ ~~ ~~ ~~n~~oduced with 'there' used as a pronoun, expressin~~
    d~~ ~~rt ~~es in the first four lines of the stanza, the speaker argues fo~~
    ex~~ ~~ce. The alliteration of /f/ in the first two lines conveys the excite~~
    with the stops and labial consonants of lines 3 and 4. This emphasises th~~
    fields of fire in lines 1 and 2 and disease in lines 3 and 4. Browning devel~~
    beginning with the **conjunction** 'whereby' (27–28), which sets up a logic~~
    Stanza V returns to the narrative by suggesting the moment when the sp~~
    such moment' when 'fire-flames kindle'.

- Exclamations and questions
  - o A feature of the speech in this poem is that the speaker seems to be ar[...] himself and acting out a dialogue with an imaginary audience. An exam[...] in line 9, where the speaker is objecting to an imagined comment that C[...] looking at him by pure chance. Stanza III begins similarly, with the **excla**[...] overcome with emotion.

Sound

The trochaic tetrameter of this poem is v[...] [...]er[...]t in effect to the **dactyls** of '[...] Laboratory'. **Trochees** are insist[...] [...], p[...][...]g the poem forward, unlike the dancin[...] dactyls. That said, there [...] [...] [...]-[...]ar metrically ambiguous lines, such as line 15, v[...] and half in '[...][...]es. [...] [...]fect underscores the way the speaker seems divorced[...] examples o[...] **ation**, emphasising the speaker's heightened state of emotion[...]

Browning uses **sound iconicity** several times in the poem to convey the speaker'[...] 'flashes' (25) not only conveys the flickering visual image of a flash, but also the s[...] as he begins to state his belief that he has made more of one moment than most[...] The whole of stanza IV is more linguistically and phonologically intense than the o[...] alliteration on /p/ suggesting the speaker is almost spitting out his contempt for [...] 'swollen ambitions'. Another example of sound iconicity can be found in the **ono**[...] knowledge' (53) as the speaker uses the metaphor of fire being doused by cold v[...] work of the devil in restricting human consciousness.

Key Terms

Demonstrative pronoun	a pronoun used to indicate something specific with[...]
Metempsychosis	the belief that, after death, th[...] oul passes into a r[...] another human.
Orientational metaphors	metaphorical [...]r [...]u[...] [...]f [...]ich uses physical orienta[...]
Parenthesis	a synt[...] [...] [...]lh [...] dependent clause which offers an e[...] [...] [...]r[...] [...]ithin a sentence.
Trochee	a metrical foot with a strong syllable followed by a [...] **had**dock.

Comprehension Questions

1. What happened when the speaker looked at Cristina?
2. Who is the 'you' in the poem?
3. What is the speaker implying about the power of love in stanza IV?
4. Explain what the speaker means by 'Better ends' and 'deeper blisses'[...]
5. What does the speaker mean when he says, 'She has lost me, I have [...]

Individual Activities

1. Research some other love poems which focus on a beloved's gaze. Yo[...] 'He Tells of Perfect Beauty' by Yeats, 'I Live in Your Eyes' by Farouk C[...] Your Eyes' by Heinrich Heine (the latter two are available in translati[...] comparisons across time and culture). How do [...] s conventionally pr[...]
2. Make a list of the lexis belonging to th[...] [...] m[...] [...]ic [...]eld of violence in t[...] and what do they reveal abo[...]t [...] [...] [...] [...]peaker perceives himself an[...]
3. Explore how Brownin[...] [...] [...]ts [...] [...]tudes to class in this poem, beginn[...] there are mome[...]t [...] [...]er [...]ned-up honours perish'. Where else do ch[...] attitudes [...] [...][...]?
4. [...]e [...]e[...] says 'Oh, we're sunk here, God knows!' in line 17. Discus[...] [...]hat ideas are associated with this metaphor.
5. [...] only: Compare Browning's presentation of the speaker's discussio[...] with Johannes Agricola's beliefs in predestination. What similarities in [...] perspective do you note?
6. **A Level only:** Examine the way Browning concludes this poem and ho[...] speaker differs from the speaker's view of themselves. Choose one of[...] also achieves this effect and explore Browning's methods in that insta[...]

Group Activities

1. The poem offers a confident voice, yet there is much doubt here, too. suggest a phrase, line or sentence that suggests some level of doubt. partner seeking to challenge your interpretation.
2. With a partner, discuss the idea that 'the eyes are the window to the it? Are they for looking into or out of?
3. Make a table with two headings: *down* and *up.* and gather images a With a partner, consider the metaphorical [...] that emerge from
4. The poem shifts from acknowledg[...] doub[...] confident certainty, but v is? Justify your choice with [...] to specific lexical, prosodic or syn should challenge y[...] vie[...] based on close analysis of the poem's lexi
5. **AS only:** In [...] review the anthology of poems and look for exam [...] Compare Browning's presentation of the examples yo
6. [...]ng individually at first, decide where you think the turning point i [...]ange for the speaker. Then discuss your decision with a partner or

Discussion Questions

1. At what point does passionate desire become unhealthy obsession?
2. Is romantic love compatible with real people, or only idealised versio
3. Romantic narratives often privilege the authenticity of lower-class ex class affectation. Why do you think this is, and has Browning followe
4. Discuss why conspiracy theories have such a powerful hold over those the idea of 'God's secret' in stanza VII express similar concepts?

Connections

- Rejection – 'The Lost Leader', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'My Last Duchess'
- Class and power – 'The Lost Leader', 'Porphyria's Lover'
- Life after death – 'De Gustibus—'
- Self-obsession – 'Johannes Agricola', 'Porph[...]'

5. Johannes Agricola in Mec[...]

Summary

A little context is required to help grasp the subject of this poem. Johanne[...]
figure who lived in Germany during the Reformation, th[...] period in the lat[...]
centuries when the Christian Roman Catholic Ch[...] [...]. Europe broke ap[...]
and movements, prompted by Martin Luthe[...] s c[...] isms of corruption in [...]
there was fierce debate over almost[...] [...] [...] of Christian belief, arising [...]
question of what Christians [...] [...] to get to heaven after death. A stick[...]
problem of God's om[...] [...] knowing everything), and some verses in t[...]
God kne[...] [...] [...] who would be saved and who would go to hell after [...]
including [...] went so far as to say that God had chosen his 'elect' an[...]
predestin[...] heaven; there was nothing anyone could do about it: those[...]
heaven were damned, no matter how good and righteous their lives were. [...]
'antinomianism', and a common criticism of it was that it admitted the po[...]
chosen could commit any sin they wished, as there was nothing a human c[...]
eternal plan for his creation.

In this poem, Browning uses the character of Agricola to explore the work[...]
he is invulnerable, able to live exactly as he wishes because of his unshake[...]
God's chosen. As with all of Browning's monologues which use historical s[...]
purpose is not to criticise a specific person or period, but to explore an asp[...]
displays **hubris** as he considers himself above the rest of humanity, free t[...]
sure he will go to heaven after death.

Form

This dramatic lyric is presented as a single, unbroken stan[...]
iambic tetrameter, rhymed ABABB. It is construct[...] [...]
sentences, each 10 lines long, and effecti[...] [...] [...] stanza in
itself, though the form on the pa[...] [...] [...] and invites the
reader to read the poem [...] [...] speech. It is not a dramatic
monologue, [...] [...] [...] plied dramatic situation such as in
'The Labora[...] [...] ee 'Browning's Forms' on page 7 for a
discussion o[...] difference between dramatic monologues and dramatic lyrics).

Time: the spe[...] existing in th[...] **Place:** a mon[...] mind include [...] **People and r[...] relationship v[...] **Events:** spea[...] birth, growth [...]

Structure

Lines 1–10 see Agricola looking up at the night sky and considering that his soul [...]
nature, but in 'God's breast'. In lines 11–20 he explains why this should be, claim[...]
Agricola 'his child' (15) even before he created the universe, 'before he fashion'[...]
he suggests God created him 'guiltless for ever' (23) because he wanted Agricola[...]
himself to a tree, which 'buds and blooms' (24) without knowing the natural law[...]
continues the tree metaphor in lines 31–40, claiming he 'must ascend' [to heave[...]
humanity, which he compares to a 'poison-gourd' (32) (see **Key Focus – faith, m[...]
he could 'blend / All hideous sins' (34–35) and still thrive, while another person v[...]
they drank the 'sweet dews' (38–39) of righteous living. He re[...]urns to the presen[...]
that he is 'full fed / by unexhausted power' (41–42) [...] [...] [...]k[...]g down on the res[...]
ghastly wretchedness' (42), frustrated by th[...] n[...] [...] to win God's love. The po[...]
laughing at those who dedicated th[...] [...] [...]oing good as priests, doctors or n[...]
another layer to Agricola's [...] [...] [...] which he mocks those who 'bargain for [...]
offering good d[...]d[...] [...] [...] God's blessing in return), saying he would never [...]
as to be co[...] [...]n[...]d by a human mind.

Style

The poem is rich in visual and auditory imagery, charged with spectacular depict[...]
Browning does not mimic natural speech; the title 'meditation' implies not a real [...]
reflecting on something within their own mind. This underlines Agricola's isolati[...]
imagined superiority to his fellow beings.

Viewpoint and identity

Agricola is the only character in the poem, at leas:
this poem only as a figure in his imagination. As t
poem of direct action or narration (such as 'Porp:
that is, a state of reflection and deep thought. H :
intellectual fanatic, a doctrinal maniac'.[6]

Browning's choice of **processes** is important
freque tly bes himself using terms of **beha**
ater actions. He 'looks' (1), 'lies' (10 and 11),
rocesses such as 'intend' and 'understand' (6 an:
inaction and passivity, how he can let the world
engage with it in any way. Even the tree is descri
behavioural verbs: it 'buds and blooms' (24). Suc
poem: 'grow', 'swell', 'blossoming gladness', 'full
bless', contrasting with the 'broken-hearted' and
Agricola contrasts himself at the end of the poen

The **material** verbs are chiefly associated with Go:
'fashioned' stars and suns (20), emphasising Agri:
decisive force in the universe. Agricola does use
himself in one passage, when he imagines how h:
as in a cup, / To drink the mingled venoms up' (3:
modal 'could', suggesting he is not going to brea:
torpor, and he concludes it with the comment th:
convert / The draught to blossoming gladness'. It
nature performing the action, not him, as this is s
There is a further irony in his choice of 'nature', a
preference for *natural*: in Christian terms it seems
God's gift of life to attempt to kill oneself.

Hieronymus Bosch, H
The Hay pt.
The process of Agricola's creation is expressed thro
'made' and 'ed' (21), but there is what might be a **slip of the tongue** in line
'made because [God's] love had need / Of something pledged solely its *content* t
Aside from the egoism of the adverb 'solely', the noun 'content' reveals that Agr:
God's love, an extraordinary claim. God, being immortal, omnipotent and univer:
this belief is heretical, yet Agricola cannot see this, such is his overweening self-b:

Agricola refers to God 10 times in the poem's 60 lines, appropriate for a speaker
is not only blessed but preordained by the Almighty. However, his spiritual corru:
cannot separate himself from what he believes to be. On eight of the 10 occasio:
Agricola includes a **first-person pronoun** within the same line or in close proximi:
Agricola cannot separate his own sense of self from what he believes God to be, a
extreme **solipsism** of his position.

The poem's **modality** operates on two levels. For Agric a, the 'law' which God o
prospers' (25) extends so far that he d mit 'hideous sins' (34) and yet be
enjoy 'blossoming gladness' Th's crtainty informs his final question, in whi:
were able to 'make a eckon on' (that is, understand) God, then God woul:
epistemic y e is based on the certainty that God is too great to unders:
that epistem ality is based on knowledge and evidence. If a speaker says, '
as hearers we assume they had access to some knowledge (someone has just co:
example) on which they have predicated their view. However, Agricola *cannot* kr

---

[6] H B Charlton, *Browning: The Making of the Dramatic Lyric*, https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.
ac-man-scw:1m2667&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF , 39

can – so Browning's intention is for the reader to read the narrative as an expres⬚
which Agricola's vanity, cruelty and arrogance inform his desire to 'speed' to Go⬚
the 'martyr, the wan acolyte [and] the incense-swinging child'.

Settings

The historical setting for the poem is established by the title (see **Summary**, abov⬚
establish a framework of connotations in which Agric⬚'⬚ ⬚ ⬚ologue should be ⬚
centre of the story world, and though the first ⬚in ⬚im⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚e may be outside, th⬚
above' (1) implying he may be lookin⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ sky, it's equally possible that the ⬚
and merely picturing the nigh⬚ ⬚ ⬚ah⬚ ⬚ ⬚im. The significance, however, is in th⬚
contempt for the res⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚onto the imagined world outside. He uses the ⬚⬚
suggest he ⬚ ⬚ b⬚ ⬚⬚d the limits of human perception, and the metaphor 'g⬚
the stars as ⬚ a boundary separating him from some greater world beyond ⬚

The visual imagery of 'shoals of dazzling glory' (9) operates on two levels: the me⬚
connoting the sea, as if the stars were swimming like shoals of fish, but a 'shoal' ⬚
a ship can run aground. This reading implies he sees the natural world as a hindr⬚⬚
whom he wants to 'speed'. The **metaphor** of the 'brood of stars' (5) implies it is ⬚
that this is a man cut off from the rest of humanity, alone and with only his own ⬚
collective noun is also associated with animals, foreshadowing the contemptuou⬚
the damned.

Nonetheless, Agricola sees himself as the central point in a vast cosmology, usin⬚
to the metaphysical universe. Heaven is 'above' (1), a 'roof' (2), 'aloof' (5), while ⬚
himself as having existed in God's mind since before the creation of the universe⬚
of 'sun and moon' and 'thundergirt' (14–15) stars. 'Girt' is the past participle of '⬚
Agricola's vision of the universe is on a huge scale, ref⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ is own vast sense ⬚

There are other settings within the p⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ey are figments of Agricola's ima⬚
way to 'God's breast', an allus⬚ ⬚ ⬚o t⬚ ⬚ biblical lexis of the bosom of Abraham (s⬚
depiction of hell is h⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚u⬚ ⬚g lexis that connotes the uncontrollable mover⬚
'swarm … i⬚ ⬚ ⬚ly ⬚ ⬚⬚chedness' (45). The metaphor of the sea appears again ⬚
time to con⬚ ⬚th the security implied by 'abode' (8) – the 'waves of flame' c⬚
emphasising his own feelings of safety and invulnerability.

Heaven does not really exist in the poem as a setting – Agricola can see only as f⬚⬚
night sky – but it exerts a powerful draw on his imagination, fusing place and tim⬚
Heaven begins as a goal, expressed through the **mental process** of 'I *intend* to ge⬚
> *What begins as a goal is then transformed into a predestined actuality, t⬚*
> *the verb from a subjunctive which implies a future culmination when he ⬚*
> *breast 'at last' to a present indicative where all is accomplished: 'I lie wh⬚*

Thus, for Agricola, his immediate physical location is suffused with the idea of he⬚
once not yet in heaven, 'looking' up at it, but also within 'God's bosom'.

Imaginatively, Agricola believes he is 'speed[ing]' t⬚ G⬚ ⬚ ⬚o ⬚[ing]' and 'prospe⬚
movement. However, the only **verb** he uses ⬚⬚ ⬚e ⬚r⬚⬚ ⬚is physical body is 'lie' (⬚
and self-delusion.

Time

The poem ⬚ ⬚⬚rough several different time frames, referenced through temp⬚
suggests this⬚⬚⬚ech is not a response to a single event, but something that Agric⬚⬚
'night by night'. The feeling of the eternal reassurance of Agricola's existence is em⬚
in lines 11 and 12, where the combinations of present and perfect tenses (I **lie** wh⬚

---

[7] E Warwick Slinn, *Browning and the Fictions of Identity*, Barnes & Noble, 1982, 42

emphasised by the **time adverbial** 'always' restate Agricola's confidence. The spea̶
significant that he only once uses the **future tense**, when he says he 'secure [his] n̶
to blossoming gladness' (37). Even this future tense appears as a subordinate claus̶
phrase, once again suggesting that Agricola exists only in the present, cut off from ̶
his delusional obsessions.

Agricola exists in three times at once: past, present and f⋯⋯. He imagines the ̶
the **past tense**, 'ere suns and moons could wax an̶̶ ̶n̶ ̶13̶), but at the same t̶
present tense on those 'swarming in gha̶t̶y̶ ̶t̶̶ ̶dness' (45) in hell. There is ̶
progression of time – compare, f̶̶ ̶̶ ̶̶, the chilling linearity of 'Porphyria's ̶
'the temporal confusion ̶ ̶̶ ̶̶ ̶̶urally the concept of predestination'.[8]

The vast ti̶̶e ̶n Agricola's imagination is expressed in his two claims that ̶
fashion'd st̶̶̶̶̶un' and that the 'incense-swinging child' (54) was 'undone / Be̶
That the phrases are identical (with the exception of 'ere'/'Before', which are sy̶
his obsession.

Key Focus – faith, mysticism and belief

- **Field-specific lexis**
  - Reading the poem requires a high degree of knowledge of the Bible an̶
    uses general terms but in the specific framework of Christian beliefs. S̶
    - 'Glory' (9) – a term associated with the overwhelming visual splen̶
    - 'Law' (25) – a term for the sections of the Old Testament, known a̶
    - 'Bless' (42) – to be favoured by God
    - 'Acolyte' (53) – a person who assists a priest in a religious ceremo̶
    - 'Ways' (58) – the behaviour of God
    - 'Arrayed' (16) – a term used in the Bibl̶ ̶ ̶̶e ̶ct of dressing so̶
- Allusions to the Bible and the Book of C̶ ̶r̶ m̶ ̶n̶ ̶r̶a̶yer
  - Agricola often **alludes** to ̶t̶̶ ̶̶l̶̶ ̶̶u̶ the Book of Common Prayer in ̶
    include:
    - '̶̶e̶ ̶̶̶ ̶̶̶̶ed star or sun' (20) – a reference to the account of ̶
      es̶̶̶
    - '̶̶son-gourd' (32) – a reference to the story of Elisha, who saved ̶
      poisonous vegetables in a soup (2 Kings 4:38–41).
    - 'thought and word and deed' (26) – a direct quotation from the pr̶
      Eucharist service, when the congregation admit and say sorry for t̶
      Note that Agricola is using it in entirely the opposite sense.
    - 'All hideous sins, as in a cup' (34) recalls Christ's prayer in the Gard̶
      should not have to drink from the bitter cup – that is, he should be̶
      in the note above, Agricola's hubris causes him to use it quite diffe̶
    - 'Paying a price' (60) – while Agricola mocks those who believe the̶
      favours by performing good deeds or living righteously, he forgets ̶
      Christ paid the price for the sins of humanity when he was sacrific̶
    - 'Suns and moons' – not a specific reference to ̶he Bible, but the p̶
      1717 hymn, 'Give to our God immortal ̶ ̶ ̶', ̶hich is a poetic re̶
- Anti-Catholic sentiment
  - Several details in the po̶̶ ̶ ̶̶e ̶ ̶ contempt for Roman Catholicism, ̶
    theologian such ̶ ̶ ̶̶ ̶̶
    - '̶̶ar ̶ ̶̶ ̶17) refers to the practice of burning incense in Rom̶
      p̶ayers rise up to God.
    - '̶̶e martyr' (54) speaks of those who gave their lives rather than ̶
      venerated as saints by Roman Catholics.
    - 'the incense-swinging child' (54) mocks what Agricola sees as the ̶
      little children by the Roman Catholic church.

---

[8] Slinn, ibid., 42

Sound

Alongside the intensity of emotion conveyed by Browning's characteristic use of
of this poem is suggested by **assonance**. In lines 2–5 the long, open vowel /ʊ/ ap
slow, contemplative quality to the verse. Modern readers may find the rhyme of
in lines 6 and 8, but this is not an uncommon rhyme, such as Isaac Watts' early e
power, whose high abode'.

One central point in the poem's phonology is the sur or 'le'. Agricola uses it as
phonetically it is identical to the verbal r   meaning 'to utter an untruth'.

Key Terms

Allusion	a reference to a well-known story or idea.
Hubris	overwhelming arrogance, typical of heroes in tragic drama, w their own abilities blinds them to the inevitability of their do
Solipsism	a form of extreme self-centredness where self-existence is t
Verb processes	verbs are categorised into four main groups. Material verbs physical world. Behavioural verbs chiefly convey psychologic represent thinking, feeling and perceiving. Verbal processes communication.

Comprehension Questions

1. Why does Agricola believe he is certain to go to heaven, and when di
2. What point is Agricola making when he compares himself to a tree 'th
3. Explain the two meanings of 'lie' in this poem.
4. Agricola mocks those who 'strive to keep his anger in' (49). Who doe be angry?
5. Explain why Agricola refuses to praise a God   would accept 'pay beings.

Individual Activities

1. Read *The P   Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, by Jam   ei   you see between this novel and Browning's poem in th
2. or the use of exclamations and interjections in this monologue. W pose do they serve?
3. Which line is most significant in emphasising Agricola's hubris? Justify y language, syntax and phonology.
4. Identify three examples of Agricola's use of the first-person pronoun Browning is revealing his mindset at that point.
5. Explore an example of deictic language in this poem and show how B Agricola's voice.
6. **AS only:** Compare this poem to 'Porphyria's Lover': both were origin Cells'. How do they present madness in different ways?
7. **A Level only:** Examine how Browning presents a speaker justifying a one other from the anthology. To make it harder for yourself, try to fi the reader to sympathise with the moral position of the speaker.

Group Activities

1. Read the poem twice in pairs, once and readers at each punctud end. Discuss what it reveals   in changing the emphasis on diffe
2. Work with a partner   up a timeline for the poem, beginning b and ending   Agricola's death.
3. d   ient or a terrifying figure in this poem? Work with a p e views of God, the other for threatening images, then discuss y
4. ola refers to himself as God's 'child' in line 15. With a partner, fundamentally childish. What evidence is there in the text to support t
5. **AS only:** Working in a group of three, compare lines 41–45 with line One person should focus on prosodics and phonology, one on lexis an findings to each other and what they reveal about the speakers' resp

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Agricola has ever committed any terrible crimes? What either way?
2. Browning originally gave this poem the title 'Madhouse Cells'. Why d and b) changed it?
3. What does this poem have to say to you today? Is it of any relevance branch of Reformation theology?

Connections

- Arrogance and hubris – 'M ᴸa ᵗ ᵎ..ꞔess', 'Porphyria's Lover'
- Life after death - ' ᵎ ᵖ ᵎ , De Gustibus—'
- Vivid ____ in ____ – 'The Laboratory', 'Home Thoughts'

6. Porphyria's Lover

Summary

This is one of Browning's most famous poems. It tells the story, through a [f]tor, of a murder. While a storm rages outside, the narrat[o]r waits in his hu[n] lover, Porphyria, to slip away from the 'gay feast' [...] [c]o[m]e to him. When s[...] sive, but he experiences an **epiphany** wh[e]n [sh]e l[...]s into her eyes and – h[...] – realises the only way he can ha[ve] [he]r [to h]imself is to kill her. With this i[...] low hair as a garrotte and s[...] [stran]gle[s] [h]er. The story concludes as the narrato[r] propped on his sho[u...] [a]n[d] [h]e confidently asserts that 'God has not said [...]

Title

Much has been made of the connection between the madness of the narrator in Browning's poem and the metabolic condition called porphyria, which causes a range of physiological and psychological symptoms. However, 'porphyria' was only used for the first time in this sense in 1923, over 80 years after Browning wrote his poem. 'Porphyria' existed as a word before Browning wrote his poem but was chiefly used in scientific discourse (it is derived from the Latin for 'purple' and appears in plant names) or as a place name. Porphyry is a hard, igneous rock, which may hint at the character of the woman in the poem. Browning first published the poem in 1836 as 'Porphyria', then changing it to 'Madhouse Cells II' in the 1842 collection *Dramatic Lyrics*. Th[e] now-accepted title was first used in 1863.

Time: chro[...] events of c[...]

Place: a st[...] and passic[...] ting of a c[...]

**People an[...] a humble s[...] high-born [...] views of th[...]

Events: re[...] ing on the [...] internal ar[...]

Form

An early example of Br[own]i[ng's m]o[n]ologues, this is formally quite simple. Argua[bly] monologue[...], a[s there] is no audience within the world of the poem, setting [...] monologue[...]s 'My Last Duchess' and 'The Laboratory'. See **Viewpoint and [...] this point.

It consists of a single stanza of **iambic tetrameter**, rhymed ABABB. The unusual rhy[...] forward motion in the poem, mimicking the speaker's desire to preserve a moment [...] tension between lines 9 and 10. The **deictic** expression 'which done' in line 10 begin[s] 'warm' and 'form' militates against the poem progressing naturally from the descrip[...] into the new semantic field of clothing, as though the speaker's mind is always laggi[ng] forwards in time. Moreover, the 'warm'/'form' rhyme chillingly foreshadows the 'bu[...] cheek later in the poem, yet such is the speaker's lack of self-awareness that he seer[...]

Style

The poem is striking for its plainness and directness of h[ow t]h[e] action is related. [...] presented in an almost wholly **linear** chronology [see **e**[...] **ocus**, below) culmina[...] action; Browning employs a surprising n[...] [o]f [de]clarative sentences in either [...] The effect underlines the spea[ker's ch]i[llin]g [l]ack of shame at what he has done, a[...] in his voice. The use of '[an]d [a]s [c]o[o]rdinating conjunction nine times in the first [...] simple clau[...]he [...] [emph]asises this quality, echoing perhaps the way that you[...] structuring [...] in their speech.

Viewpoint and identity

Were this poem a dramatic monologue, we should treat the poem as a spoken ut[...] another listener. However, there is no listener within the world of the poem, and [...] reader to consider this as a performance for the Lover himself. There are momen[...] such as the imperative 'Be sure' (31), but this can be read as self-justification. Cer[...] emerges as the poem progresses: he uses the personal pronoun 'I' in line 5, but it [...] 'looked up at her eyes' in line 31. This moment, amplif[...] e confidence impli[...] change in the speaker when his sense of self e[...] [...] the first-person prono[...] second half of the poem. See **activity** [...] below for further discussion of [...]

The pragmatics of the [...] [...]teresting: it is not a conversation, and there is no [...] otherwise ([...] ak [...]ues not even address Porphyria herself), yet the speaker a[...] such as in th[...]tic **fallacy** of the opening, where he invites a sympathetic respo[...] passions. On the other hand, despite the poem centring on the **taboo** of murder, he[...] when he describes the action: he uses the material process verb 'strangled' with no [...]

Settings and place

The poem begins with a dramatic description of a storm raging outside the cotta[...] mirroring the speaker's emotional turmoil as he waits with 'heart fit to break' (5[...] adverbial builds tension within the poem, implying that this night will be differen[...] language is simple: 'rain' (1) standing for 'tears' is almost a **dead metaphor**, and [...] passionate feeling is well-worn, again underlining the intellectual limitation of th[...] **pathetic fallacy** is also marked by irony through the speaker's choices of verbs a[...] the rain 'tore … for spite' and 'did its worst to vex the lake' (4). The phonology of [...] **cacophony** in the density of hard consonants such as /t/, /p/ and /k/, not only ev[...] weather but also the speaker's emotional turmoil.

The speaker may wish for the reader to s[...] his[...]with them, seeing them as s[...] **hero**, but these images also all be[...] [...] semantic field of an angry child. To [...] of a desire to hurt or off[...] [...], and the implication of 'did its worst' impli[...] action, thou[...] e s[...] seems unaware of these connotations. Through this [...] characteris[...]peaker not as unreliable but **limited**, someone whose inheren[...] their actions.[...]

The immediate location of the action is a 'cottage' (9), a setting which marks the [...] lower classes. Beyond that, there is almost no other detail to describe the house[...] action and the speaker's obsession with his moral choices. Porphyria herself is m[...] implying her elevated social status.

People and relationships

Though Browning includes a wealth of physical detail about Porphyria, the syntax [...] speaker than her. Initially she is associated with **material processes**: she 'glides' in [...] 'made the cheerless grate blaze up' (9), suggesting the speaker sees her as almost [...] and ability to transform the physical environment (ironica[...] [...]trasting with his la[...] … to … give herself to me forever' (21ff)). Though [...] t [...] only character in the [...] fascinated by her physical appearance, he [...] [...] w[...] her clothing (gloves, cloak, [...] (hair, waist, 'smooth white sho[...] [...]). The succession of physical details le[...] striptease, especially as [...] [...]uses on sexually suggestive parts of the wom[...] throat' (40)[...]yr [...] [...]aracterised through soft consonants, frequently fricati[...] 'smooth' an[...]lder' and /f/ of 'form', lending her a sensual, desirable quality i[...]

The poem's use of colour imagery implies some of the lover's moral judgements. [...] ripeness and sensuality, contrasting with the deathlike purity of her 'white' shou[...]

The metaphor which underlies the relationship is of tying and untying. The speak
break', his heart barely able to constrain the emotions he feels. In the first part o
characterised through the semantic field of opening and unbinding: she 'withdre
Her hat', 'made her … shoulder bare' and 'her yellow hair displaced'. However, fo
free herself from her 'vainer ties' (24) that causes him to hold her in contempt. F
process, 'winding' (39) her hair around her throat as he strangles her, before he
process, 'opening' her eyelid (albeit 'warily') (44), before ' elieves he has freed
See **Key Focus** below for much more on the topic e uple's relationship.

Key Focus – activity v as y

The poem divides into u y equal halves; in the first, Porphyria is the pow
the lover h ed rol.

- The lo ssivity from line 6 to line 22 is emphasised through Browning'
  very simple grammatical structures, as well as the omission of the first-perso
  one sentence, where 'She' (7) is the subject and the rest of the sentence is a
  constructions linked by 'and'. The effect is to convey the lover's passive look
  not offering any more comment than 'and' as a **conjunction**. **Polysyndeton**
  childlike, emphasising the difference between Porphyria's mature agency an
- The only first-person pronouns in this section are where the lover places hir
  indirect object in a sentence. In a telling reversal of conventional gender rol
  woman possesses the agency in this scene, even going so far as to 'put my a
  woman is the agent here, arranging the man's body as she wishes, rather th
- Porphyria is the only character to speak in the poem: she 'calls' the lover (15
  silence emphasising his passivity. (It is significant that he should strangle he
  with her voice, his action silencing her forever.) His use of the **metonym** 'no
  sense that the lover seems disembodied in this early on of the poem, su
  arranges him physically as she 'made my che on her shoulder.
- The passage from lines 21–29 begins th e transition from the lover b
  out by Porphyria to being th s own romantic drama, and this is th
  does not relate dram It appears as a **parenthesis**, offset from the
  the spe o on that Porphyria is 'too weak' to give herself to him
  the m ification for the later action and provides some implicit narrat
  evening speaker uses the semantic field of conflict to convey how he se
  'struggling' between her 'passion' (23) and the social obligation of 'vainer tie
  it introduces **figurative language** back into the poem after its absence since
  implies Porphyria may be engaged ('ties' alluding to the 'bonds' of marriage
  in a **complex sentence**, also a contrast to the lines preceding it, reinforcing t
  (and sexual) arousal. This passage also hints at the history of their relationsh
  implying some frequency in the lovers' encounters in the past, and the lover
  thought' (28) which spurred Porphyria to come to him that night.
- The lover's decision to act is prompted by his decision that she 'worships' hi
  come 'through wind and rain' (30), she must consider him a god, an ironic re
  'gliding' in and reanimating the lifeless lover by making the grate 'blaze up'.
  returns as the speaker 'debated what to do' (35), until s resolved in the lo
  moment she was mine, mine, fair, / Perfectly gu od' (36–37). The n
  and **alliteration** emphasise the speaker e or triumph, yet the sentenc
  attention. The repetition of th e **pronoun** comes first, foregroundi
  'Fair' comments on h appearance, before he moves to Porphyria'
  in abstra err this is undermined by the temporal deixis of 'that n
  becau hy a 'worships' the lover that she is 'perfectly pure and good'
  speake ense self-centredness.
- His reaction to this moment of erotic triumph is equally troubling: the stere
  leap on his horse, gallop through miles of trackless forest, shimmy up a mou
  before claiming his lover with a kiss. Browning's lover 'found a thing to do' (
  here is eerily disembodied, first through the passivity of 'found', implying va

Worse still is the use of the **indefinite article**, 'a' to define 'thing'. The lover d
do' (i.e. the decisive, only course of action possible), nor offers he any qualif
tender thing to do.' Instead, Browning returns to the childish diction of the d
the phrase implies an infantile pleasure in distraction from boredom.

- The strangling itself unfolds with almost erotic pleasure over five lines, and Br
chilling enjoyment of this moment in a number of ways. The reference to Por
erotic fascination with it in the first half of the poem (' ; ne only colour refe
from her 'white' shoulder). The sentence stru ur it f, running over three l
winding itself, twisting round over se , ies until the shocking conclusion i
strangled her'. The **caesura** a er i   [+1] is the **climax** of the poem, yet the s
conveys his own wo i s t ae moment of his triumph. The lover tries to re
beginn   n . with 'I am quite sure' (42), yet the very fact of feeling d
additio   repetition of 'no pain', calls it into doubt in the reader's mind.

- The simile in lines 44–45 is a chilling one. The lover imagines Porphyria's clo
bee has been trapped, which to open would release the angry insect and ris
image of a 'bud', carrying connotations of female genitalia, underscores the
murderous power in this poem. Moreover, use of the adverb 'warily' to adn
confidence of 'I am quite sure' two lines earlier.

- Where lines 6–27 were marked by an absence of the first-person pronoun, I
The lover begins every other line with 'I', emphasising his newly discovered
structural symmetry reinforces the dramatic symmetry of the scene. Having
arranges her so that her head 'droops upon' his shoulder.

- The **erotic imagery** of 'bud' (43) is continued in the idea of Porphyria's head
shoulder, a twisted image of post-coital bliss, but Porphyria herself still only
parts: 'The smiling rosy little head, / So glad it has *its* utmost will' (53, my er
dehumanises Porphyria even as the lover projects his ow fantasy of Porph
Significantly, it is at this point that the poem mo   . o ne **present tense**, i
between the time of the killing and the m n nt c speech.

- Typically of Browning's derange i er , ne speaker in this poem **projects** h
order to justify his killi   or e believes – or at least claims to believe –
'utmost w a   move into the realm of **abstract nouns** at the end o
concre   ns. otably, he continues to use the pronoun 'it', rather than '
inabilit   e Porphyria as a real person even while he characterises her as
who 'scorns' the world of 'gay feasts' in order to be with her 'pale' lover.

- At the beginning of the poem, it is Porphyria who controls the semantic fiel
the 'grate *blaze up*' (my emphasis), but after the murder, the lover gives her
is a dark irony here: Porphyria being dead, there is no way her cheek could '
longer any circulatory action to supply blood to the cheek. Yet again the spe
reality. Browning emphasises the derangement in the speaker's mind at this
euphony to describe a horrific scene: the alliteration of 'blushed bright' (48)
'droops' (51) convey the speaker's delight and erotic arousal.

- The poem ends with a chilling vignette which parodies the lexis of romantic
unmoving, on the sofa, and the power the lover gained at the climax of the p
polysyndeton of the first part of the poem returns, implying the speaker's ca
as it ever was) is ebbing away again. Note how th   ic ly of the final line i
poem has largely been in regular **iambic t tr m**   , yet 'God' – which, as th
stressed – falls on a weak syllab' hi ne **temporal adverb**, 'yet', falls on
in the line implies a def   nn   the speaker's voice, expressing contempt
condemn hat   c has done. Stressing 'yet', by contrast, introduces a
speake   iti for something they fear is inevitable. It is left to the reade
whethe   ast line is merely a statement of fact or an illocutionary act ch
the speaker has done.

Key Terms

Byronic hero	a dashingly handsome, brooding figure driven by fierce p... antisocial: 'mad, bad and dangerous to know'.
Dead metaphor	a figure of speech whose figurative effect has been lost o... metaphorical content of the image has been lost (such as...
Epiphany	a moment of sudden clarity which radically reshapes the s...
Metrical ambiguity	the effect of a line of poetry wh... is not immediately... stressed, creating a range of possible meanings.
Mimesis	where language... – often by means of phonology... denot... ...tion itself.
Polysyndeton	... of clauses linked by an unusually high numbe...

Comprehension Questions

1. Which poetic technique sets the mood at the beginning of the poem?
2. Which of the two characters in the poem is male: Porphyria or the lov...
3. What has the cottage been like before Porphyria arrives?
4. Who is dominant in the first section of the poem? What evidence is th...
5. Put lines 23–26 into your own words.
6. How are the lovers sitting at the end of the poem, and how has this ch...
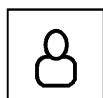
Individual Activities

1. Rewrite the poem from Porphyria's perspective. Which details from B... particularly interesting or suggestive?
2. Identify each time that the lover projects his feelings onto Porphyria. H... anxiety that causes him to project his feelings in this way?
3. Explore an example of enjambment that you f... particularly effectiv...
4. Some argue that the colour imagery i... p... m presents Porphyria o... colours suggest this, and how fa... e... lover's own mental state af...
5. Write a paragraph di... ... effect of the imperative 'Be sure' (...
6. Discuss what the... 's a shut bud that holds a bee' (43) reveals a...
7. **AS only:** C... re... e presentation of a woman in this poem and 'M...
8. ...el... Examine Browning's use of mimetic language in this poem...

Group Activities

1. With a partner, discuss what you understand by the term 'heroism', b... Does Porphyria's lover consider himself a hero? How do you think Bro... reflect on the idea of heroism in literature?
2. Discuss the implications of the ambiguous metre of the final line. Shoul... your view? In pairs, debate the question, one person taking each side... textual evidence.
3. Imagine that the lover has been found and arrested for his actions. H... Role-play the scenario, drawing on details of the text to prompt ques...
4. Is the lover in love with Porphyria, or the idea of Porphyria? Discuss th... bodily and moral lexis in the poem to support your view.
5. **AS only:** Compare the final line of this poem with lines 56–60 of 'Joh... pairs, debate which character Browning makes se... m more dangerous...

Discussion Questions

1. It has been said of 'Po...ia's...ver' that 'the horror story is itself th... relatively little r...a...ic... ...character. What evidence is there to sup...
2. Do you th... ...n...g is sceptical about love, its power and effects?
3. ...ph... ...uel?

Connections

- Solipsism – 'Cristina', 'Johannes Agricola'
- Power – 'The Lost Leader', 'My Last Duchess'
- Materialism and idealism – 'Cristina', 'Prospice'

7. Home Thoughts, from Ab

Summary

The speaker expresses a passionate desire to be in England during the mo
country's abundant natural beauty. He seeks to convey the excitement of
arrival of spring and the overwhelming beauty of the English countryside.
contrasting England to 'this gaudy melon flower' (20), a symbol of Italy.

Form

A short lyric. It begins with two very short lines of trochaic trimeter, gr building to a loose iambic pentameter in the second stanza. The rhyme scheme settles into a largely stable pattern of rhyming couplets, except for the alternate rhymes of lines 1–4 and 11–14.

Time: the

Place: Eng
overseas

People a
'everyma
beauties

Events: n
building r

Viewpoint and identity

The speaker in this lyric does not identify themselves, but it seems they are looking back at England from elsewhere, most likely Italy, suggested by 20. Browning refers to melons in 'De Gustibus—' when describing the barefoot g assassination attempt on the King of Naples, so the fruit can be seen as a **meton** **adverb of place** 'there' in line 2 functions deictically: England can only be 'there'

The poem begins and ends with expressions of dissatisfaction: the **exclamatory '** longing, while the **visual adjective** 'gaudy' (20) carries connotations of cheapnes

Settings

The speaker offers an **idealised** image of pastoral England, similar to the lane in ' free of pain or suffering. The setting is of human activity, except for the 'chil line 19, casting it as a whole imagined scene, not linked to any real place. It func is, cheap and showy melon-flower' which stands for Italy. Browning does not n landscape, the poem a universal quality. This is not true nature, however natural world of the orchard (7) and the field (9–10) where nature's power is tur and excesses excluded.

The only intrusion into the beauty of England in this poem is the 'hoary dew' (17 morning, but this is fleeting, burnt away by the sun's heat.

The poem's lexis is filled with the semantic field of nature – trees, flowers, birds, the English countryside. Some may be unfamiliar to modern, urban readers:
- Bough – a large branch of a tree
- Brushwood – thin branches
- Bole – the trunk of a tree
- Chaffinch – a small bird with a distinctive red breast
- Whitethroat – a small bird with brown plumage and a throat
- Swallow – a small, migratory bird which swoops to catch flying insects
- Spray – a garland of flowers
- Thrush – a medium-sized bird with a particularly beautiful song
- Buttercup – a small, yellow wildflower

However, the ditionary purpose of the poem is not merely to inform the read The first line establishes a mood of **boulomaic modality**, the **interjection** 'O' exp elsewhere. As such, the poem can be read as a double journey, one in which the English landscape is accompanied by the speaker's imagined return to childhood (16) and the reawakening of the 'buttercups' (19). Implicit here is a rejection of t 'gaudy' flowers of swollen melons serve as a metonym for this – and a yearning f

Time

The poem's syntax is almost wholly in the **present tense**, lending it an immediacy that complements the ideas of emergence and newness associated with spring. The first stanza effectively begins and ends with 'Now' (2 and 8), and the second stanza represents the passing of time into May by beginning two lines with 'and', suggesting new sensations appearing suddenly.

The landscape in England is in a proce~~ ~~r ~~ ~~ning, suggested by the pattern of images be~~gin~~ ~~lin~~ ~~wakes', 'tiny leaf' (6), 'follows' (9), 'builds' ~~(1~~ ~~ ~~ ~~(18), 'children's' (19).

Where the ~~f~~ ~~nza (April) is primarily visual, the second stanza foregrounds the sense of hearing, using the **imperative** 'Hark', to direct the reader's imagined ear to the song of the 'wise thrush'. There is some sense of the past in lines 14–16, when the speaker describes how the thrush 'sings each song twice over' to 'recapture / The first fine careless rapture' (14–16). The noun phrase, 'first fine careless rapture' suggests the Garden of Eden, a place free from care, implying this landscape is a continuation of an eternal cycle of rebirth and rediscovery of joy. The completion of the cycle is set up in the shift to the **future tense**, as the speaker asserts that 'all will be gay' (18) when the warm noontide sun burns away the 'hoary dew' ('hoary' means white and carries associations of old age).

Gustav Müt~~z~~

People and relationships

There is no implied audience within the ~~r~~ ~~ ~~ ~~ld of the poem, though the ~~s~~ 10 to direct the reader's attenti~~on~~ ~~ ~~ ~~gined song of a thrush. The **second-p**~~e~~ once, but rather than b~~ei~~ ~~ ~~ ~~dress to a listener or reader, it is more of a h~~

In the first s~~ ~~he thought is of a hypothetical person, 'whoever'. In the seco~~n~~ **pronoun** 'my~~ ~~(11) brings the landscape into the realm of the personal: a garden, ~~ as well refer to an imagined 'pear-tree'.

Though not strictly characters, the richness of birdlife in the poem deserves com~~ unrestrained joy as it 'sings' (7), while the whitethroat and the swallow are pictu~~ receives a more detailed description, where the speaker **anthropomorphises** it a~~ be 'wise' – it has a brain the size of a peanut – but Browning attributes this quali~~ he places on 'recapturing' the 'careless rapture' of spring. This could be read as i~~ the passing of time – a theme touched on in greater detail in 'De Gustibus—'.

Key Focus – phonetic patterning

The poem begins with a general, unformed idea of 'En~~gla~~ ~~nd 'April', which, a~~ unaware' takes on a clearer, more distinct ima~~ge.~~ ~~vr~~ ~~achieves this throug~~ progressively smaller images until tiny d~~ ~~ap ~~nto focus. For example, the p~~ … brushwood sheaf … tiny leaf' ~~r~~ ~~ve~~ ~~the large, low branches of a tree to s~~ like a cinematographer ~~ ~~rom a wide-angle shot to a close-up.

This emergi~~ ~~ciousness is underlined through the poem's phonetic pattern~~ Paterson call~~s~~ consonantal homophony' to create the 'unconsciously experience~~ effectively creating the background mood of the poem on which 'rhyme, assona~~

---

[9] Paterson, Don: *The Poem: Lyric, Sign, Meter*, Faber, 2018, *https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=4N1JDwAAQBAJ&lpg=PT14&pg=PT53#v=onepage&q&f=false*

In the first four lines the most important consonants in those lines are nasals, fri⬚
relatively gentle, quiet consonants:

Oh, to be in England	(nasal)
Now that April's there,	(nasal)
And whoever wakes in England,	(fricative, semivowel)
Sees, some morning, unaware	(fricative, nasal, semivowel)

The introduction of the stop in 'wakes' marks the ⬚⬚ t ⬚ ⬚n the poem finds a s⬚
general expression of yearning at its beg⬚⬚ ⬚

Lines 5–7 shift the soun⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚losives and fricatives, chiefly /b/ and /tʃ/.

*Tha⬚⬚⬚ow ⬚ ⬚⬚ghs and the **b**rushwood sheaf*	(plosive)
*Rou⬚ ⬚elm-**t**ree **b**ole are in **t**iny leaf,*	(plosive, stop)
*Whi⬚⬚e **ch**affin**ch** sings on the or**ch**ard **b**ough*	(fricative, plosiv⬚

These new consonant sounds sharpen the reader's awareness of the new 'tiny le⬚
aurally underlining the change taking place.

The second stanza expands the scope of the poem to view April and May as well ⬚
line. Correspondingly, the palette of consonants expands to include semivowels, ⬚
the rich variety of nature:

*And after April, when **M**ay **f**ollows,*	(nasal, fricative)
*And the **wh**ite**th**roat builds, and all the **sw**allows!*	(semivowel, plo⬚

Line 11 changes the poem by issuing an instruction to the reader to 'Hark' (listen⬚
subordinate clause introduced by 'where' is a complex image personifying the p⬚
Flora, scattering 'blossoms and dewdrops' on the clov⬚ ⬚ ⬚h edge of the field. ⬚
complex, so do the phonetic qualities of the ⬚⬚er ⬚ in⬚ ⬚ducing the /dʒ/ **fricative** ⬚
denser lyric ground for this phase of ⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚o ⬚ ⬚.

*Hark, where my b⬚⬚⬚ ⬚e⬚ ⬚⬚ar-tree in the he**dg**e*	(fricative, plosiv⬚
*Leans to the ⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ s⬚⬚tters on the **c**lover*	(fricatives, stop)
*Blo⬚⬚⬚⬚n ⬚ ⬚ewdrops – at the **b**ent **sp**ray's e**dg**e –*	(plosive, stop, p⬚
*Tha⬚⬚⬚⬚wise **th**rush.*	(voiced fricative⬚

The unity of nature is depicted in the density of alliteration, extending over seve⬚
tree is evoked in the use of **enjambment**, with three lines running over until the ⬚

Lines 16–19 introduce two more new sounds, and use /f/ for alliteration for the ⬚
outburst of breath changing the mood to one of wonder.

*The **f**irst **f**ine **c**areless rapture!*	(fricative, stop, ⬚
*And though the **f**ields look **r**ough with hoary dew,*	(fricative, retrof⬚
*All will be **g**ay when **n**oontide **w**akes anew*	(stop, nasal, sen⬚
*The **b**utter**c**ups,*	(plosive, stop)

'Rough' is particularly significant, as the only word in th⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚n with any negativ⬚
out from those around it, particularly through ⬚h⬚ ⬚s⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚e **back vowel** /ʌ/. It i⬚
gathering energy of the stop, nasal an⬚ ⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚ ⬚e⬚ ⬚f 'gay', 'noontide' and 'wake⬚
enjambment to the image of '⬚⬚ ⬚erc ⬚ ⬚ which begins with a striking plosive.

The final tw⬚⬚⬚ a ⬚ ⬚ ⬚e poem to conclude more peacefully, but Browning us⬚
theme of th⬚⬚⬚iority of the English landscape to the 'melon-flower' of Italy. ⬚
simply 'some⬚⬚ing that is theirs forever'. A dower was originally a sum of money ⬚
by her husband so that she was provided for if she became a widow. The sounds ⬚
the principal consonant sounds from the rest of the poem, creating a musical an⬚

*The little **ch**ildren's **d**ower,*	(fricative, stop)
*- **F**ar **br**ighter than this **g**audy **m**elon **f**lower!*	(plosive, stop, n⬚

Key Terms

|	
Affricate	a phoneme which combines a plosive with an immediate spirant sharing the same place of articulation, e.g. ch a̍s
Anthropomorphism	the attribution of human characteristics to a god, anim̍
Back vowels	vowels which are articulated near the rear of the vocal ̍ ('food'), /ʊ/ ('put'), /əʊ/ ('boat'), /ɔː/ ('caught', 'hoard')
Pastoral	a literary and artistic genre whic̍ ̍ ̍resents the countr̍ beauty and freedom fro̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍d corruption.
Phonetic patterning	the construct̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍s u̍ poetry around specific phone̍

Comprehension Questions

1. ̍̍ ̍e is the speaker in this poem?
2. ̍̍ch detail signifies the arrival of spring in lines 4–6?
3. Which two birds are depicted building their nests?
4. What is scattering 'blossoms and dewdrops'?
5. Put the phrase 'hoary dew' into your own words.
6. Explain why the buttercups are 'the little children's dower'.
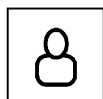
Individual Activities

1. Research Sandro Botticelli's painting, *Primavera* (Spring), in which you̍ goddess Flora, wearing a richly embroidered dress and scattering flo̍ she symbolises, and how do these add to your understanding of the p̍
2. Explore in detail the effect of sound iconicity in one line of this poem.
3. Write a paragraph on the effect of one example of enjambment in t̍
4. **AS only:** Compare the presentation of landscape with 'De Gustibus—̍
5. Using your knowledge of conditions for factor̍ ̍rkers in nineteenth-̍ of this poem in which they convey their ̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ce of early April in a̍ Gaskell's *North and South* is a q̍ ̍ ̍ p̍ ̍ ̍ ̍o start if you do not know̍ working classes in ninet̍ ̍ ̍ce̍ ̍̍ England). How do you find your̍ alliteration, soun̍ ̍ ̍ic̍t̍ ̍ differs from Browning's?
6. **A Level on̍ ̍ ̍ p̍ ̍e Browning's presentation of memory in this poen̍ ̍̍tic̍ ̍̍ ̍o choose a poem in which the speaker's memory is unr̍

Group Activities

1. Make a mind map of ideas associated with 'England'. With a partner̍ living in the 1850s (the height of the British Empire) might have thougĥ Gustibus—' to add notes showing contrasts to views of Italy.
2. Make a table with two headings: 'Real' and 'Imaginary'. Which detai̍ imagined landscape and which a real landscape? Discuss your choice̍ **Extension:** Write a short essay in which you argue for or against the ̍ an imaginary landscape in this poem.
3. With a partner, identify the three most significant images in the poen̍
4. **AS only:** With a partner, make a detailed comparison of the opening̍ this poem, focusing on what makes them different. Try to think of at le̍ is the most significant difference.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe ̍ ̍ ̍in̍ ̍̍en he claims, 'whoever wakes in England̍ ̍
2. Thi̍ is o̍ ̍ ̍ ̍ w̍̍ng's most popular poems. Why do you think it ha̍

Connections

- Ideal and real landscapes – 'De Gustibus—', 'Meeting at Night'
- Patriotism – 'The Lost Leader'
- Vivid settings – 'The Laboratory'

8. Meeting at Night

Summary

A lover makes his way by boat to meet his beloved, who lives on an isolate[d]
the lover out at sea, far from the shore, and relates [...] stage of his journe[y]
crossing some fields and then arriving at his [belo]ve[d]'s house.

Form

A short, lyr[ic] o[f] [t]wo stanzas, each of six lines of iambic
tetrameter, [rhyme]d ABCCBA.

Time: a su[]

Place: an i[]

**People an[d]
travelling []

Events: de[]
his journey[]
lovers mee[]

Style

Notable for its avoidance of features of natural speech, this poem
is characterised by very concise, sensory diction, and a focus on
external event, rather than interiority and reflection. The setting
is used throughout to imply the speaker's feelings, contributing to
the sense of a person completely possessed by wanting to attain one goal.

Structure

The poem is a simple chronological narrative. It begins at sea, and in the final two lin[e]
reaches a small bay. In the second stanza he races along the beach and across some []
beloved's house. The stanza concludes with the lovers whisperi[n]g perhaps at, perha[]

Perspective

First-person, present tense, in th[e] [...] [o]f [t]he action. (For the purposes of thes[e]
be male, but this assum[ption] [...] [...]d only on the conventions of romantic narra[]
relationship[s] [...] th[e] [...].)

Gender a[nd] Identity

The poem does not offer any **gendered pronouns** or names, but it is arguable tha[t]
actions and moods conventionally associated with masculinity in literature. In R[omanticism]
often associated with dynamic action, entering territories and driving action forw[ard]
taken as a judgement on whether these qualities are really proper to masculinity[]
take issue with this interpretation, and rightly so.)

Look at the shift in place from the world of the masculine to the world of the fe[male]
shifts from verbs such as 'gain' and 'quench' (5–6), both associated with action a[nd]
language suggesting a more feminine world: 'warm sea-scented' (7), 'a voice less []
of the 'pane' (9) of the farm's window.

Key Focus – double journeys

Though the poem evokes place with gr[eat] [dens]ity, it does not dwell on any det[ail]
temporal deixis is simple in th[at] [...] [']and', 'as' and 'then' link the chronologic[al]
suggesting a rapid m[ov]e[ment] [thr]ough a landscape. However, the speaker's journ[ey]
from emoti[onal] [...] [...] [...]to intimacy and acceptance.

In this poem, despite its clearly romantic subject matter, the speaker never expli[citly]
Browning uses sensory descriptions of the landscape to imply the speaker's feeli[ng]
imagery.

A list of the physical locations and the stages of the emotional journey suggested:

1. Open sea (grey sea, distant land, yellow moon, little waves) – feeling lost, an determination to reach the beloved
2. The cove (cove, slushy sand) – forward motion, grasping an opportunity, suc
3. The beach – increasing sense of the closeness of the beloved
4. Three fields – impatience until the lover at last comes into sight
5. A window pane – anxiety, fear of discovery
6. An unnamed place where the lovers embrace – the absence of any deictic m love transports the two lovers out of the physical world and into the bliss of

The deictic centre of the poem

In a poem such as 'Porphyria's Lover', the deictic centre of the poem is clearly th that speaker (his intense self-centredness). However, in this poem, there is no deic movement and feeling of dislocation experienced by the speaker until he is unite beloved. Browning achieves this effect by using only 'and' as a **coordinating conj** than **prepositions** expressing the deictic relationships of the various locations. B with 'Then', Browning suggests this speaker is moving through a continuum, rath specific goal in mind.

Sound

Browning employs **sound iconicity** in this poem, and the use of different phonol essential to the poem's structure and evolving mood. Lines 1–3 employ a series o and low, little waves that leap) which evoke the vast emptiness and indistinctnes within this, the vowels change from back vowels (long, large, low) to front vowel introducing a greater sense of urgency. In lines 4–6, Browning introduces sibilant plosives (pushing prow, speed), all conveying more rapid movement and the incr experienced by the speaker.

Lines 7–8 are characterised less by patterns of consonants than by a series of open farm, appears). Browning avoids hard, sibilant consonants in these lines, and few evoking the movement through the landscape and suggesting the romantic love buil 10 return to plosives (tap, pane, sharp, spurt) and introduce velar consonants (qui particularly onomatopoeic, evoking the immediacy of the experience and heighten speaker as he tries to gain his lover's attention without waking the rest of the hous poem use sibilants to convey the two lovers speaking in hushed tones, but the pho plosive **b** in '**b**eating' conveys the intensity of the lovers' feelings, contrasted with h

Time

The poem is in the present tense, and Browning does not include any **flashbacks** future events). However, he manipulates **narrative time** in the poem. The poem time seems to stand still, emphasised by the lack of a verb in the first two lines. T again as the narrator uses three verbs of movement: 'leap', 'gain' and 'quench' (3 continues the same extreme compression of narrative time through the contrast mile … three fields') and the concision of the language. Narrative time slows dow the level of detail increases once again.

Key Terms

| Deictic centre	the place and time text is 'anchored' to. For example, in a between someone in London and someone in Manchester, i ... coming to Manchester next week', it anchors the utteran said, 'I am coming to Manchester next week', the deictic cen Manchester.
Prolepsis	anticipation of future events.
Sound iconicity	the use of sound to mirror meaning. This includes, but is not reader perceives a natural resemblance or analogy between object or concept it refers to in the real world.

Comprehension Questions

1. Identify an example of pathetic fallacy in line 3.
2. Which word in line 4 foreshadows the poem's conclusion?
3. How far does the lover have to go from the boat to the farmhouse?
4. What details suggest this is a secret meeting?
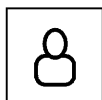
Individual Activities

1. Identify visual images which have ~ ~ri ~ ar symbolic value in the poe headings: 'Symbol' and '~ ~ ~t ~ ~ns'. What does this add to your un
2. Take a line from ~ ~ ~f ~ which you think is particularly evocative an What che'~ ~ ~ ycu notice Browning has made?
3. a ~ ~ine of the poem which represents the stages of the doubl ~de should represent the physical spaces, the other side his spirit Choose a textual detail that links the two and explain its effect.
4. **AS only:** Compare Browning's presentation of the journey in this poem
5. **A Level only:** Examine Browning's presentation of journeys in this poem collection. You are **not** allowed to write about 'Prospice'.
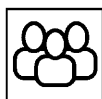
Group Activities

1. Work in groups of three to change the perspective on the events of th the poem with 'Yesterday I…', another should use 'Tomorrow I will' an should use 'By the end of tomorrow I will have'. How do the changing ~ poem? Why do you think Browning chose to use the present tense for h
2. Annotate the **prosody** of the poem – mark strong syllables with a ¯ ab Identify places where it was hard to reach a decision and discuss abo mood of the poem.
3. With a partner, read Goethe's 'Wilkomme ~ ~ ~A ~schied', written in translation under the heading 'Wel ~or e ~ ~Departure' https://germanstories.vcu.e~t ~g ~ ~./wiilkommen_e3.html), which is a of a lover racing th~ ~gn ~ ~ght to his beloved. What elements of th include, and '~ ~ ~ ~ varied them in his version? Focus on choices of ~ et
4. o you think the lovers have to meet in secret? Can you think of ot
5. together to write a paragraph entitled, 'Before the poem begin your response is shaped by details in the poem, and how far have yo romantic narratives?
6. **AS only:** With a partner, compare how Browning ends this poem and show how the poems are similar, the other how they are different.

Discussion Questions

1. Would reading the protagonist of this poem as female be either cred
2. Do you believe such romantic clichés as 'two hearts beating each to e~ love in such unrealistic terms?
3. Does this poem try to be anything more than just a vivid, concise represe~

Connections

* Romantic love – 'Porphyria's l~ ~ ~ ~ ~, ~ ~ ~ng at Morning'
* Powerful feelings – 'I~l ~ ~ies, ~icola', 'The Lost Leader'
* Place – 'Porph ~ ~ ~ ve~', 'Home thoughts, from abroad', 'De Gustibus—

9. Parting at Morning

Summary

This is the companion piece to 'Meeting at Night'. Browning wrote in 1889 in both poems: 'it is his confession of how fleeting is ... belief (implied in raptures are self-sufficient and enduring – as ... th ... ime they appear.' Th woman he visited in 'Meeting at Night' ... in ... ut at the beginning of a ne around a headland, the sun ri ... ... mountains, and the speaker is fi way in 'a world of men'.

Form

A very brief **lyric**, in **envelope rhyme**. The first line is in iambic pentameter but omits the first weak syllable, beginning on the stressed 'Round'. The remaining three lines are in iambic tetrameter.

Time: daw
Place: look landscape
People an characters
Events: the to journey

Viewpoint and identity

Over the course of these four lines the speaker seems to emerge into a new consciousness. In 'Meeting' he was the romantic adventurer, braving the sea at night for 'two hearts beating each to each', but now he becomes the masculine hero, setting out to conquer 'a world of men'. Reading the poems together we see how this poem acts as a completion of 'Meeting', the man returning to his rightful – as he might see it – place in society. The poem ends on 'for me', suggesting the speaker's self is now complete, the ol ... swept away by the tide rushing round the cape.

Whereas 'Meeting' ended (aptly ...) ... an image of two lovers unified, this poem ends i ... ... expressing a conception of masculinity ... r ... ...dividual endeavour and strength as superior to ... ic harmony.

The most telling **verb** in the whole poem comes in the final line, when the speaker confesses to 'the *need* of a world of men' (4) (my emphasis). For all the drama of the sea, the mountain and the rising sun, there is a fragile quality to this speaker's masculinity.

Caspar

Browning seems somewhat critical of the speaker in this poem. According to him, the speaker perceived the 'raptures' (i.e. love and erotic bliss) 'enduring' 'as for the time' they appeared to him. In the morning he realises that and that he must return to work and 'a world of men'.

Settings

The speaker presents with a highly dramatic sens ... e ... rojected through the **imagery** suggestive of adventure and esc ... ... e ...a' and the 'mountain's rim' the unknown (a little like Word ... ...ounter with the 'huge peak' beyond *The Prelude.* Yet where ... ...ordsworth was overwhelmed by that experi feeling of s ... a ... ...found energy from the mountain's rim). The alliterati /s/ in 'sudd ... 'sea' (1) contributes to the emergent energy of the scene.

The reflection of the sun's light on the sea is described as 'a path of gold' (3), a h light. The connotations of wealth associated with 'gold', as well as the mercantil (the poem was written at a time when women had little access to commerce) im motivated by a desire for wealth.

On the other hand, the semantic field of change and transition – the tide coming
looking 'over the mountain's rim' – imply that the experience of the previous eve
new determination arises as the result of the previous night's erotic bliss.

These conflicting interpretations challenge the reader to pin down the poem's m
verbs to establish whether the speaker's view is **epistemic**, **deontic** or **boulomaic**
'need' in the final line. Two readings of 'need' can be pro   here: first, the sp
'for me' functions like a reflexive pronoun – myse'   or   / purposes; alternative
reading where it is the 'world of men' wh   d   he speaker. If the speaker fe
boulomaic or deontic, depending   er you read the speaker being motiva
charged by erotic trium'   to fulfil certain obligations proposed by a v
world of m   he   is aware of the world's need for him, then the mood
speaker fee   r pressure to meet that need for him – or epistemic, stating a
(implied by t adverb 'straight' in the preceding line).

The poem's brevity makes discussing Browning's **intentionality** a challenge here.
discourse of romantic narratives it could be a triumph (erotic fulfilment elevates
and spiritual fulfilment), a tragedy (erotic fulfilment is always spoiled by the intru
disappointment (the lover seems to have forgotten everything that meant so mu

Time

Where 'Meeting' took place in the secrecy and intimacy of night, the **symbolism**
opportunities and new realities. Time at once stands still and rushes onwards in t
sudden' and the light breaking over the mountain ridge both imply rapid change,
past – rather than a continuous form – for all the verbs creates the sense of a mo
of movement.

People and relationships

Given that this completes 'Meeti   , what is striking is how the woman
this poem. Like the 'slus   cove, she has been erased by the tide of
her body u   igi   e.

The sun, however, is **personified** in this poem, given a regal 'path of gold', a cont
lighted match' in 'Meeting'. Masculine power is the winner here.

The 'world of men' can be read as a **metaphor**, where 'world' stands for systems
of the description of the natural world – in striking contrast to the detail of 'Mee
speaker is moving away from the heightened awareness of reality which surroun
beloved and into a world of abstraction in the form of commerce and governmen

Sound

The poem begins with a stressed syllable, the /r/ of 'Round' imparting energy to
matched by the regularity of the stresses in the rest of the poem and the use of
there is none of the fluidity of 'Meeting' in this poem. M   essed syllables use
the exception of the **onomatopoeia** of 'sudden' a   here is no alliteration
It is almost as if the speaker's decision t   to   he 'world of men' shuts dow
the natural world, which were   elt in 'Meeting'.

Key Term

Dynamic v	a verb which describes an action.
End-stopped line	a line of poetry which ends in a full stop or other punctu
Envelope rhyme	a stanza in ABBA form.

Comprehension Questions

1. Which meaning of 'cape' is most appropriate for line 1?
2. What looks over the mountain's rim?
3. Where can the speaker see a 'straight … path of gold'?
4. Where does the speaker decide to go next?

Individual Activities

1. Write the woman's thoughts when she wakes to find the man returning she perceive the sea, the sun and the sun?
2. Mind-map the different needs' the man might have of 'a world of me the type al reading that applies to them (deontic, epistemic or in our view of which need he feels most strongly and link it to ons.
3. AS only: Compare how Browning presents self-obsessed love in this p
4. Make a table marked 'Masculine' and 'Feminine'. Sort the lexis of this Night' into these columns based on the connotations of each word. Wl differences between the two poems? How has the poetic voice change

Group Activities

1. Look at the Caspar David Friedrich painting reproduced above. With about masculinity it suggests and how the dramatic landscape both d does Browning use language to present similar ideas in 'Parting at M
2. Work with a partner to come up with ideas for what might be meant contrast with ideas expressed in 'Meeting at Night'?
3. The poem is written in the first person, but the speaker is not a person sympathetic to or critical of the feelings the speaker expresses? Discu with views based on close analysis of the

Discussion Question

1. Looking at 'Meeting', how does this poem change your view of
2. m ing of a cliché to talk of the transitoriness of love in poetry hat feeling is Browning writing about in this poem?

Connections

- Landscape – 'Home Thoughts, from Abroad', 'De Gustibus—'
- Travel – 'Prospice'
- Men and women – 'Cristina', 'My Last Duchess'

10. 'De Gustibus—'

Summary

The poem's title is the first part of a Latin saying, 'De gustibus non est disp[...] roughly as 'there can be no debates over taste', the s[...] being that taste is [...] preference, hence there can be no reasonable [...] at [...] about it. In this poem[...] express the differences he perceives b[...]n [...] beloved and himself. It is [...] wholly personal tribute to his [...] [...]beth, but there is no internal evide[...] trees' to whom the first [...] is addressed. This person, the speaker asser[...] countryside [...] m [...] [...] their ghost 'will walk' there, watching a tender, p[...] play out [...] ar[...] and byways of May and June. The speaker, though, lo[...] landscape [...]s rebelliousness.

Form

This poem is a lyric, rather than a dramatic lyric or monologue. It consists of two stanzas, the first slipping flexibly between different metrical forms: the first four lines are ABBA with two lines of catalectic iambic trimeter enclosed within iambic tetrameter (though these both contain an extra, unstressed syllable). The stanza continues with a mixture of tetrameter and trimeter lines. The rhyme scheme can be summarised as ABBA(A)ACCDDDDD (the (A) rhyme on 'coppice' (5) *just* rhymes with 'poppies' and 'please' either side of it). The DDDDD is very unusual and a striking sonic effect.

Time: a[...] differer[...]
Place: E[...]
People a[...] of trees[...] girl selli[...]
Events: [...] the site [...]

The second stanza is much more uniform, consisting of ia[...] [...] tetrameter, thoug[...] flexible. It begins in couplets, but the pattern bre[...]s [...] r[...] The rhyme on 'Italy' a[...] lines. The final line is metrically very str[...]g, [...] st scanned as two lines of trocha[...] line with six irregular feet.

The sta[...] in [...]view

Character	You	I
Time	Youth, a fleeting moment, springtime and early summer	Epic, anci[...]
Space and setting	England, pastoral, small, enclosed, delicate beauty, birth	Italy, vast and deat[...]
Characters	Two young lovers, innocent, transient	Political, s[...]

Viewpoint and identity

The voice seems quite personal here, and the sentiments of the poem fit with Br[...] landscape and culture. The character here is constructed almost wholly through [...] are discussed in detail below.

The *persona* is passionate, ending the poem with a ser[...] [...] [...]clamations, imagi[...] ghost returns to Italy, the country closest to hi[...] h[...]art, [...]owning marks the differ[...] in the narrative through **modality**: th[...] [...] d[...] [...] [...]'s ghost 'will walk', a statement [...] the speaker uses the modal l[...] [...] [...]v[...] [...] love' (14) to express a **boulomaic** desire [...]

Setting[...] t[...] [...]

Simply put, [...]t stanza is a depiction of a pastoral scene, abounding in natur[...] exists in a fleeting present. The second stanza is a dramatic, dangerous depiction [...] alarmingly modern. Time and setting are inextricably linked in this poem, so, rat[...] chapter, pairs of quotations from each stanza are offered to illustrate the ideas t[...] substantially shorter than the second, they both follow a similar pattern: the lan[...] described, and the stanza ends with a **coda** drawing the themes and ideas toget[...]

by side it is possible to illustrate the development of the voice in the poem and t[...] evocation of Italy.

1. **'English lane' (3) and 'A castle … In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine'**
   The country lane is a stereotypically English scene, locating this setting in th[...] a small, enclosed landscape winding at a slow pace. Italy is represented by [...] gash of the wind-grieved Apennine', a much more dramatic landscape. The [...] creates a sense of the **sublime**, an experience defin[...] the philosopher E[...]

   > *Whatever is in any sort terrible … a [...] of the sublime; that is, i[...] stronge[...] which the mind is capable of feelin[...]*

   This crea[...] [...] which finds excitement in danger and the most powe[...] cas[...] e[...] exposure, and the 'gash' in the mountain rock sets up the[...] viol[...] which characterises the whole stanza. The Apennine mountains [...] Italy, and Browning suggests they are a place of mourning through the co[...] grieved', perhaps aurally foreshadowing the idea of engraving which app[...] use of the **proper noun**, contrasting to the more general 'lane' of the firs[...] history to the speaker's conception of Italy, suggestive of the famous Ro[...] The English lane is timeless, yet, as will be shown below, fleeting. Italy is [...]

   Browning's use of **sound iconicity** underscores the difference between th[...] characterised by liquids such as 'lover', 'loves remain', 'English lane', crea[...] conjunction with the relative absence of stops. By contrast, lines 14–16 a[...] '**b**est', '**c**astle, **p**reci**p**ice-encurled', '**g**ash', '**g**rieved **Ap**ennine'. This evokes[...]

2. **The 'cornfield-side' (4) and the 'sea-side house to the farther South' (21)**
   These two locations begin to set up a tension between lexis of fruitfuln[...] d death which develop as t[...] [...] progress. The 'co[...] [...] ies the bene[...] t [...] ture, tended by man to [...] d sustain him. The 'sea-side hous[...] however, is an isolated place – I do not think Browning intends us to picture a pleasant holiday villa – at the mercy of the elements. The 'farther South' moves the setting to a region which suggests the landscape around Naples, finding a specific emotional resonance in images of the dramatic landscape of the Amalfi coast and the threatening mass of Vesuvius.
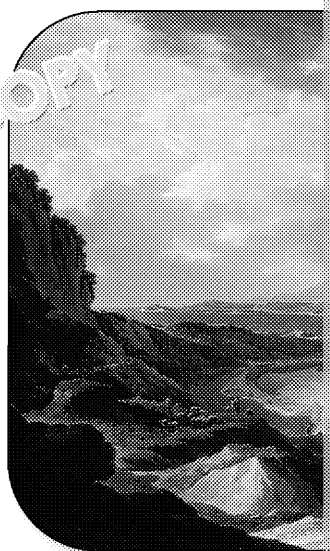
   Michael Wutky: *View* [...]

3. **'A-flutter with poppies' (4) and 'the baked cicala … one sharp tree' (22–[...])**
   The English landscape gains a light, delicate quality in the image of the flu[...] through the **prefix** 'a-', which implies contin[...] a[...] tiv[...]ty. However, whil[...] warm red to the scene, the poppy is [...] o [...] m[...]onym for the drug opium [...] implication being that the E[...] s [...] e may exist only in some dreamlik[...] by the omission of [...] n[...]ns or the specific detail that develops in th[...] lexis t[...] ev[...] [...] emantic field of death in the description of Italy. Th[...] 'cic[...] e [...]etle whose distinctive chirping song can be heard at night [...] bee[...] ed' by the summer heat, a frightening contrast to the gently 'fl[...] 'sharp tree' is a cypress, a tall, slender pine tree whose branches were us[...] classical Athens. The violent landscape left behind, Italy has become a pl[...] in ancient time.

---

[10] *https://www.bartleby.com/24/2/107.html*

However, along with this, Italy also becomes a place of untamed ripenes[...] cornfield represents nature managed for mankind, in Italy the walls of th[...] 'ripe fruit', challenging the 'iron spikes'. The pattern of using **compound** [...] expanded here: 'ripe fruit-o'ercrusted' suggests both life and death, the [...] **juxtaposed** against the 'crust' forming around the building.

Here, sound iconicity evokes light, fluttering mov[...]t in the English w[...] 'flutter' and 'cornfield' and the voiceless [...]/p[...] 'poppies' (which is n[...] voiced /b/ stop used in the descr[...] of [...]y above). Italy, as above, is [...] stops such as /k/ – 'spike [...]sted', /d/ – 'dies of **d**routh' and the [...] spiked, ripe fru[...]d'. The density of consonant sounds in line 2[...] cru[...]t [...]t of a mass of sounds in such close proximity.

4. **'Haze[...] coppice' (5) and 'Great opaque / blue breadth of sea' (28–29)**
   The two settings here contrast in scale, developing the enclosed/open c[...] mountains. A coppice is a small area of woodland which is cut back and n[...] of the 'corn-field' from the preceding line of nature controlled and tame[...] opaque / blue breadth of the sea' is strikingly different. Following the lex[...] the sea is a mighty, untameable force, developed by the three adjectives[...] premodified by more than two in the poem. The **assonance** of 'great' an[...] **alliteration** of 'blue breadth', creating a powerful sense of scale. 'Opaqu[...] **imagery**, reinforcing the unknowable sublimity of the ocean. The sense o[...] the choice of the **present tense verb** 'expands', implying an ongoing pro[...] pattern of sound iconicity set up above, whereby England is evoked in fr[...] while he uses stops for Italy: '**b**lue **b**readth ... **b**rea**k**'.

5. **'Crumbles some fragment of frescoed walls' [...]2)**
   This description of the house evokes th[...] id[...]e of Pompeii, whose fres[...] were preserved by the ash cl[...] n[...] up by the eruption of Vesuvius in [...] Browning develops th[...] ise [...] ancient history and classical civilisation be[...] the Bay of N[...] [...]t spaces of history echo the vast spaces of the s[...] om[...] su[...] detail in the description of England, which in this poem exi[...] Not[...] the fresco, just like the sea, is in a permanent state of flux: the **p**[...] indicates an ongoing process of decay, the past ever falling to dust in the s[...]

6. **'A boy and a girl' (6) and 'A girl bare-foot' (34)**
   Having established the mood and temporal framework for the two settir[...] characters. Both scenes include children – adolescents – but the details [...] a couple, and Browning affords them no descriptive adjectives, in keepin[...] representative quality of the setting. They are balanced, described only t[...] Italy, by contrast, the girl is not counterbalanced by a boy, and she is 'ba[...] indicates her poverty – the region around Naples was – and in part rema[...] her freedom and connection with the land. She exists in a state of poten[...] another as the English couple are. They are settled, representative of an [...] ways are immutable.

7. **'If the good fates please' (6) an[...] [...]pion sprawls ... there's news to[...]**
   At this point in the Engl[...] sce[...] ew influence is introduced through a[...] **subjunctive** 'pl[...] [...] stabilising the **pastoral** idyll established in the pr[...] ins[...] o[...] and uncertainty of 'please' are balanced by the adject[...] is n[...] ork, but nature: a dangerous scorpion lurks beneath 'blisters' [...] and corruption. The **alliteration** of **sibilants** in 'scorpion' and 'sprawls' er[...] 'news' may seem to sit uncomfortably with the scorpion, but it is part of [...] which informs the description of Italy. Both the scorpion and the 'news' [...] stark contrast to the **euphonic** long vowel sounds of the English scene.

8. **'Making love, say –' (7) and 'Brings, and tumbles / Down on the pavem**
If the two scenes were painted, the English scene invites the gentle indis
suggested by the tender off-handedness of 'say – ', allowing the line to d
'say' continues the delicate uncertainty of 'if the good fates please' in the
meant to court or pay amorous attention to someone – you would 'make
their attention and indicate your interest. The modern sense of sexual in
twentieth century. There is, nonetheless, a euphc   ic quality to the ph
eyes as one would expect of an English pe   aly, however, the ima
coloured, and correspondingly m   re   rongly charged with sexual
her thus:

> [Italy's] girl i   ot because she is savage, an erotic link between the
> el   s (an emblem of her own sexuality: young, gamey, raw) a
> assassination'.[11]

The present-tense verb 'tumbles' contrasts with the **progressive verb** 'm
the poem into the present, out of the slow progression of 'crumbles', the
more explicit.

9. **'The happier they' (8) and 'The king was shot at … She hopes they have**
England has drifted into dreamy bliss; Italy acquires the sharp, cold light
comparative adjective 'happier' continues the theme of moderated bliss
making love. In Italy, however, the violence of the castle and the 'gash of
suddenly finds a very modern expression in the form of revolutionary co
century, Italian nationalists were seeking to overthrow foreign dominatic
incident itself is fictional (it exists in the imagination of the speaker as he
represents the turmoil of Italian political and social life at the time. The t
'was shot at' suggests that such violence is part of   yday life in this wo
suggestive of Naples, Browning brings the   ; o   d   s immediate histo
noun 'Bourbon', the name of the   ly who ruled Naples at the
he brings her to life as a r   unlike the hazy figures of the boy ar
She is revolution   icn the 'felons' against the crippled figure o
wing'   n   here comes from cooking, referring to an old way o
cor   ns of 'liver' are of coldness and bitterness, implying the girl se
som   s, inhuman). The use of **parataxis** in this passage (35–38) conv
rapid pace of the news. The speaker in this section of the poem aligns hir
politics that were sweeping Europe during the nineteenth century, in cor
'lover of trees', metaphors for stability and enduring values.

10. **'Draw yourself from the light of the moon' (9) and 'Italy, my Italy!' (39)**
Where the first stanza dissolves into the ghostly light of a **nocturne**, the
direct address to the 'lover of trees' seems an instruction to leave behin
unreality: the **preposition** 'from' suggesting that the ghost is merely drift
does not properly belong there. The moon's light is pale and white, cont
greens of the Italian scene, and the long -oo- vowel adds to this sense of
England, it seems, is becoming little more than a hazy outline, a dying me
'Italy, my Italy!', following the **reported spee**   he girl, brings the Ital
Structurally it surprises the reader   no transitional materia
personal pronoun emphas   w   s vision of Italy is very much the in
speaker, not a real   Th   hortness of the line, emphasised in its **pro**
troche   a   he introduction of a new rhyme, accelerates the po

11. **'Let**   **pass' (10) and 'Open my heart and you will see / Graved insic**
The **pastoral genre** often expresses a regret at the transience of existenc
and this stanza ends with a similar sentiment. The lovers ('they') will fade
vision of England must fade, emphasised by the **future tense epistemic**

---

[11] Karlin, Daniel: *Browning's Hatreds*, Oxford, 2011

The fleeting nature of life concludes the line and stands in contrast to th[e]
form of 'engraved'). The speaker here recalls a remark attributed to Mar[y]
after her army surrendered the port of Calais to the French in 1558: 'Wh[en]
will find Calais written on my heart.' One critic has complained that the p[oor]
workmanship'[12] and the two **parenthetical lines** about 'fortune's malice'
uncomfortably interrupting the train of thought. Nonetheless, 'fortune' [has]
good fates' of stanza I into a malicious entity, in k[eepi]ng with the savage[ry]
setting. Browning's use of sound iconicity [conv]e[ys] [th]e two different moo[ds]
the gentle sibilants of 'pass' evok[e] [th]e [gentl]e fading away of the English [while]
'Italy' suggests upward [ener]g[et]i[c m]otion.

12. 'An[d, a]s [I] [pond]er' (14) and 'So it always was, so shall ever be!' (46)
    The [final] stanza ends with a **lament** expressing grief at the passing of [the]
    time [m]ust steal all lovely 'bean-flowers' and birdsong away. The D rhyme
    lines to bring the stanza to a close with a gentle musicality expressed in t[he]
    stanza with the semantic field of solidity in the 'trees', the beauty of earl[y]
    heat of July and August. In Italy, however, the speaker turns away from t[he]
    transforms the country into a 'lover', the metaphor suggesting a passion[ate]
    the final line echoes the Christian prayer known as the **doxology** as it en[ds]
    For all the suddenness and violence of the Italian scene the speaker seem[s]
    an echo of the passion, violence and upheaval of countless ages.

People and relationships

The characters in the poem have been discussed above, but the relationship betw[een]
trees' is also significant. Some believe that the poem is addressed to Browning's w[ife]
travelled extensively in Italy, but line 18 denies this: the poem['s] address to an 'old [friend]
'fellow' implies intimate friendship, not romantic lo[ve], [so t]he t[o]ne is perhaps more
The second line of the poem could be read a[s] [a q]ui[p ab]o[ut] their relationship, but th[e]
respective loves of different countr[ies] [s]hi[ne a l]ight on the lover of trees? Perhap[s]
'graved' in his heart sugge[st] [th]a[t] [hi]s affections as unchanging, so the implicati[on]
affections are [mor]e p[recario]u[s]. The speaker imagines their afterlives, creating an in[timate]
something [of c]las[si]cal tradition of lovers descending to the underworld. The lo[ver]
complaisant [as t]he speaker is confident it 'will walk', shown through the **future t[ense]**
by contrast, is a more complex figure: it seems reluctant to return to the world of t[he]
whether he can 'loose [his] spirit's bands' (20). There seems to be something of an [intimacy between]
characters: the *persona* admits he will struggle to 'get [his] head from out the mou[ld]
juxtaposition of the colloquial 'get my head' and the more dramatic 'grave' create[s]

Key Terms

Direct address	speech directed to a specific person.
Doxology	a short hymn of praise used in Christian services. The most c[ommon]
the triune God and asserts his eternal power, 'as it was in th[e]
more shall be'.
Euphony	combinations of phonologica[lly] [pl]ea[sin]g lexis.
Juxtaposition	the placing of contra[sting] [i]de[as,] images or words next to ea[ch]
effects for th[e] [read]e[r. N]ote that juxtaposition is only the tec[hnique]
juxt[aposed] [ca]n have a terrifying, amusing, shocking or uns[ettling]
[effect] [o]ffered for consideration.
Lament	an expression of sadness, grief or regret.
Parataxis	placing short, independent clauses next to each other.
Proper noun	a noun that in its primary application refers to a unique enti[ty,]
Uranus, Gilgamesh or Apple.

---

[12] Tillotson in Tracy, ed: *Browning's Mind and Art*, London, 1968, 202

Comprehension Questions

1. Who are the 'two in the hazel coppice'?
2. What will happen 'if the good fates please'?
3. What season of the year do bean-flowers and the blackbird's tune si
4. Which is the first region of Italy the speaker thinks of, and what is the
5. What features of the landscape can be found 'farther South'?
6. What is meant by 'opaque'?
7. What news does the barefoot girl bring ... nc is her attitude to i
8. Who is the Queen Mary referred to i lin
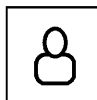
Individual Act

1. ... compare how the *personae* of this poem and 'The Lost Lead eals.
2. Many of Browning's speakers imagine futures for themselves. Make a futures to which you can refer for revision purposes.
3. **A Level only:** Explore how Browning presents a foreign country in thi collection.
4. Identify three specific details (e.g. the scorpion) from the Italy section connotations of that image.
5. Choose three lines in the poem (either as a single unit or from differer sound iconicity particularly effectively. Analyse how Browning achieve explain why it is so effective in conveying the speaker's emotions and

Group Activities

1. Make a mind map together of ideas you associate with Italy. How do find in this poem?
2. Read the poem again and identify all the ... ages which create stanza. Which image is most effective ... up of three, each choo choices, using linguistic analy ... te...al context to support your vi
3. In pairs, reread the ... ging reader at each change of rhyme ideas are or ... emphasised through rhyme?
4. ... ur- ... py of the poem, with different colours to represent t L ...cuss the effects which Browning achieves by shifting betwee
5. ...ly: With a partner, read aloud the opening section of this poen person should read the first line of this poem, then the other the first li have read each pair of lines, compare and contrast them.

Discussion Questions

1. Is the speaker in the poem in love with the 'real' Italy? With a partne and against the proposition that the poem presents the 'real' Italy.
2. Research Constable's painting of Fen Lane, East Bergholt (1817). Hov England evoke similar ideas and moods to this painting? With your p rural life you think he has omitted, and why do you think he has done
3. Geoffrey Tillotson wrote of this poem: 'The structure of Browning's po was when he came to fill out the grand structure with words that he o architect allowed shoddy workmanship fro ... cklayers.' (See foo with your partner: are there any poin ... hi oem where Browning'

Connections

- Life ... - 'rospice', 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover'
- Vivid ... s – 'The Laboratory', 'Meeting at Night', 'Parting at Morning'
- Italy and England – 'Home Thoughts, from Abroad', 'My Last Duchess'

11. Prospice

Summary

The title of the poem is a Latin imperative verb, meaning 'look forward', o~
might instruct a lookout or tell yourself not to miss a~~ing while driving
shortly after Elizabeth Barrett Browning's de~~ n ~54, which affected B~
he said: 'I shall live out the remainde~ ~~ ~y ~~] in her direct influence, e~
mine, miserably imperfect no~ ~ ~ ~ t~ take the good she was meant t~

Form

This **lyric** is ~~personal, but formally quite regular, consisting
of longer, four-stress lines (tetrameter) alternating with shorter,
two-stress lines (dimeter). The poem is mostly **iambic**, but many
lines include **anapaests** (a strong syllable followed by two weak
syllables), lending the poem something of the quality of natural
speech, if not quite **sprung verse**, as Hopkins might have termed
it. Some lines include five, or even six, stressed syllables, evoking
the stronger emotions felt by the speaker.

Time: the ~
immediate~
Place: an i~
mountains ~
**People an~
personifie~
speaker's ~
Events: th~
facing dec~
bliss of be~

Viewpoint and identity

This poem is heroic in conception, conveying the speaker's desire to confront de~
fighter' (13). The opening of the poem seems a challenge, a question in answer t~
two strong syllables (a **spondee**) and the pause immediately after, almost defyin~
of their own. The diction of the poem is very concise, furt~~ onveying the dete~
their response to death. The use of **contrastive c~~ ~~ ~~ ~s** such as 'though' an~
defiance in the face of challenge.

The use of the **definite** ~~ ~~ ~~ ~~ define 'strong man' implies that the speak~
to death as ~~ ~~ ~~ ~~y of being a 'strong man'. This idea is expanded in th~
tournamen~~ ~~uced by the **archaic** 'guerdon' (11), which was the prize awar~
jousting tour~~~ent. The **alliteration** of 'guerdon' and 'gained' in that line contr~
heroic action, which culminates in 'I was ever a fighter'. The simplicity of the **dict**~
adverbial 'ever', the first time in the poem that the speaker looks backwards fro~
striking about this passage is the simplicity of the diction: with the exception of '~
monosyllabic and of Anglo-Saxon origin, suggesting the speaker sees themself as ~
straightforward in speech as he is in action.

In lines 15–16 the speaker rejects any idea of receiving pity or mercy at the mom~
'creep past' death with his eyes closed, demanding instead to 'taste the whole o~
perhaps alludes to the Garden of Eden, where tasting the apple led to complete ~
having 'bandaged ... eyes' (15). The **sensory verbs** of 'feel the fog ..., the mist' (1~
The verb 'taste' (17) increases the degree of **lexical intens~~~ ~upported by the ~
which presents death as a sensory experience.

The poem is highly **alliterative**, re~~~ ~ ~~ ~~rrative **epic poems** of the Anglo-Sa~
as the principal structural ~~ ~ ~~ ~~n a line of poetry. Anglo-Saxon poetry divide~
the middle, h~~ ~e ~ ~ ~~ ~s were linked through alliterated stressed consonant~
Browning d~~ ~~ g~~o this extent with his use of alliteration, but alliteration suc~
by a caesura,~~~ecially emphasised by the Anglo-Saxon 'fare' (from **OE** *faran*, to j~
identifies himself with 'the heroes of old' (18). The term 'peers' is an interesting or~
denotes 'one of the same age group or social set', but this dates only from 1944 (w~

---

[13] Quoted in Kennedy & Hair, ibid., 293

significant rise in popularity[14]). Before then it was more strongly associated with a[...] describe the knights of the Round Table in **Arthurian romance**. 'Heroes' (18) might [...] Lost Leader': poets who broke new ground and fought to establish themselves.

The masculine force of the frequent use of strong consonants in alliteration is e[...] **ellipsis** and **asyndeton**. Lines 17–20 could include 'and' in several places, but the [...] force, conveying the determination the speaker wishes t[...] onstrate at the h[...] elliptical, omitting 'of times' after 'the worst' and '[...] [...] after 'the best', contri[...] determination and certainty in the poem[...]

Settings

In contrast [...] er [...] as 'De Gustibus—', the settings in this poem are who[...] express the [...] f mind or emotion the speaker imagines will face him as he a[...] they are **pathetic fallacies**. The landscape is sketched through a series of details [...] region. **Natural imagery** of 'fog', 'mist' and 'snows' is apt for a poem on the them[...] cold, confusion and the potential to lose one's way. The **fricative** /f/ sounds of 'f[...] evoke the swirling vapours. Moreover, the 'mist' serves a literary function as an [...] the underworld, which was depicted as a 'realm of mist and gloom',[15] also intro[...] associated themes of heroic endeavour and unfailing love such as that suggested [...] **Focus** below for a more detailed discussion of how metaphor functions in the th[...]

Lines 1–9 culminate at the top of a mountain, when the 'summit [is] attained' (9[...] metaphor for death, used by many poets, including George Herbert, who calls d[...] However, for Browning the mountain is a place of struggle and fear. The descript[...] tension in the poem, progressing from the indeterminate and mysterious 'fog' t[...] more dramatic through the military connotations of the 'bl[...]'. Moreover, this is [...] **plosive** has been used at the beginning of a word, [...] [...] g [...] e effect of the im[...]

Lines 5–6 serve are **relative clause[...]** [...] in [...] he place'. The use of **alliteration** i[...] of 'the ..., the ..., the ...' c[...] [...] [...] eaker's fear of this place. The blackness of [...] confusion, ju[...] 's [...] [...] veys the feeling of being assailed by powerful force[...]

This oppres[...] [...] tural scene shifts into the background in lines 10–19 as Brown[...] conflict centred around the speaker's idea of a heroic encounter with death. The [...] line 20 in the **tripartite construction**, 'pain, darkness and cold'.

Heaven itself is not described, except through the single word 'light', and even th[...] **indefinite article**, making it seem small and weak, like a candle in a vast room.

This is, however, not the only journey taking place in the poem. As with 'Meeting [...] not only forwards: there is an implicit journey back to a happier state of being in [...] grapples with the pains of his past. The temporal adverb 'again' in the penultima[...] looking forwards but also backwards, an escape from the torments conveyed by [...] dominate the central part of the poem. There is also an impli[...]t desire for a new [...] speaker asserts his wish to 'fare like my peers' (17) v[...] [...] [...]g his self-picture as [...]

Time

Like 'De Gustibus—', the [...] [...] [...]rward to an imagined moment in the futur[...] imagines the [...] a[...] [...] [...] 'Prospice' focuses on the time before death and the[...] There is no [...] fr[...]mework for time within the poem, but there is at once a dil[...]

---

[14] See Google ngrams: *https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=peer&year_start=1800&[...] ing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cpeer%3B%2CcO*

[15] Homer, *Hymn 2 – To Demeter*, trans. Evelyn-White, Hugh *http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/[...] seus:text:1999.01.0138:hymn=2*

[16] Herbert, 'The Pilgrimage', in Herbert, ed. Cook, Ware, 1994, 101

time. The verbs in the first four lines suggest a prolonged period of time: the sense
of state, the beginning of a new sensation. This is developed by the **existential ver**
participle 'I am nearing the place' creating tension by retarding the progression of

There is a brief flicker where the poem looks backward: line 13. This offers a highly
speaker's life: 'I was ever a fighter.' The **time adverbial** 'ever' implies a life spent in
that he as a writer had spent his whole career fighting aga... the literary establish
Lines 22–23 mark the dramatic climax of the poem, the 'back minute' at the hei
speaker imagines. The use of **anaphora** ... the impression of a sudden increa
calm. 'The' begins each clause in ... , each one an insistent beat of the d
climax, expressed in the ... verbs 'rage' and 'rave'. The next four clause
followed by ... verb, but only in the fourth clause is there a noun i
has been tr... ed into; namely, 'peace'. The **abstract noun** contrasts with th
voices', allow... the pace of the action to slacken. Line 26 recalls 'Meeting at Nig
achieved through the anaphora of 'then' and the metonymy of 'light' and 'breast
contrasting with the connotations of fog, snow, darkness and battle from earlier
naturally to 'soul', popular belief supposing the latter to reside in the former, but
tenderness, furthermore easing the pace. The choice of 'rest' to conclude the po
the Christian service of the burial of the dead: 'Rest eternal grant unto them, O L
upon them.' The function of this allusion is to transform the poem from the actio
blissful light of an imagined eternity with the woman the speaker loved and wors
exchanging letters 20 years before.

People and relationships

Only the speaker in the poem is characterised in any detail. Death is presented a
'the Arch Fear' (7); this is an echo of 'Arch-Fiend', the term ...d by Milton for Sa
Lost (see *PL*, Book 1, line 156). The change in name is ... Satan is a figure
his own right, but 'Fear' is an internal qualit... of the speaker himself. T
not with external forces, but with h...

Death is **personified** ... al ways in the poem, firstly as 'the Arch Fear in a vis
becomes a... tic... er: prisoners condemned to be executed by firing squad h
of mercy so ... ey did not see the soldiers lining up to kill them. Death seems
especially through the choice of 'bandaged', which has connotations of medical

The only other character in the poem is 'thee', who appears in line 24, emerging
imagines his eyes opening to a light which reveals to him his beloved's 'breast' (i
The breast is a **metonym** for Elizabeth, emphasising her nurturing, consoling qua
begins with an ecstatic **exclamatory sentence** to create an **apostrophe** where th
to express his unrestrained joy at being reunited with the 'soul of [his] soul'. The
speaker's passion for Elizabeth.

Key Focus – thematic unity

This poem is notable for the high degree of thematic unity which Browning achie
domain.[17] There are two principal thematic patterns in the poem: confusion and
the former express the emotional state the ... k ... magines when he faces dea
underlying metaphor of life/journe...
- Semantic field of conf... conflict includes:
  Fog, mist, ow..., power, press, foe, Fear, barriers, battle, fighter, figh
  cold, b...ge, fiend-voices, rave

- Semantic field of journeys includes:
  Nearing, go, journey, summit, barriers, gained, last, creep, fare, dwindle, ble

---

[17] See Don Paterson's excellent essay *The Domain of the Poem II: The Poetic Contract* in Poetry Rev
sion of how metonymy and metaphor function to create thematic unity in poetic discourse.

Browning uses sound to emphasise the sense of confusion and conflict in the po⬚ consonants he uses for alliteration:

- f: fear, fog, face (1–2, voiceless fricative)
- b: begin, blasts, (p)lace (3–4, bilabial voiced plosive)
- p: power, press, post (5–6, bilabial voiceless plosive)
- st: stands, strong (7–8, voiceless fricative combined with an alveolar stop)
- g: guerdon, gained (11, velar stop)
- b: bear, brunt (19, voiced bilabial plosive)

The high frequency of stops ar⬚ ⬚osi⬚ ⬚ contributes to the muscular quality of t⬚ Notably, the frequen⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚tion declines from line 24 onwards after the de⬚ example be⬚ ⬚in⬚ ⬚ with 'peace out of pain', where the denotations of the l⬚ than lines 5⬚ ⬚example. The end of the semantic field of confusion and confl⬚ change of consonants from stops and plosives to gentler consonants and longer ⬚ begins with six words, five of which include open vowels, and none of which end ⬚ this to the first line, dominated by 'fog' and 'throat': the openness of the sounds ⬚ evokes the peace and beauty of the poet's imagined new existence in Heaven.

Key Terms

|	
Anapaest	a foot consisting of two unstressed syllables follo⬚
Apostrophe	the breaking off of a narrative for the speaker to ⬚ part of nature, an inanimate object or an abstrac⬚
Contrastive conjunction	conjunctions employed to link two ideas conside⬚ 'yet', 'but', 'nevertheless'.
Epic	a form of poetry which recou⬚ ⬚s extended narrat⬚ deeds of deities or m⬚ ⬚ ⬚ ⬚i⬚ ⬚l heroes.
OE	abbreviatio⬚ ⬚ O⬚ ⬚F⬚g⬚sh. Refers to the dialects ⬚ 11⬚⬚

Comprehension Questions

1. What does the title mean, and which mood is the verb in?
2. What type of sentence is 'Fear death?' (1)?
3. What weather conditions are described in lines 1–3? What do they s█ dying?
4. What is 'the Arch Fear' (7)?
5. What is meant by 'guerdon' (11)? What semant█ ield does it introdu█
6. What ideas are suggested when the spe█ █ █y. he 'would hate tho█ (15)?
7. What does the speaker s█ █es █ut his life when he says he must 'i█ / Of pain, darkne█ █nd █ █ (19–20)?
8. What techni█ █ █ █petition is used in lines 24–25?
9. █ is █ █y 'thee' (27)?
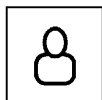
Individual Activities

1. Choose an example of enjambment in the poem and explain why it is █ literal meaning of the words at that point.
2. Choose a different poem from the collection where the speaker belie█
   a. **AS only:** Compare and contrast the ways that Browning present█ poems.
   b. **A Level only:** Examine some of the ways Browning presents thos█ strong.
3. Explore in detail the choice of three images of confusion and conflict. █ image that convey ideas of confusion and conflict?
4. Choose one of the shorter lines which you think is particularly effectiv█ and ideas. Explain your choice and the linguistic effects behind it.

Group Activities

1. Make a table with two headings: 'Fe█ █ █, 'Strength', then note dow█ from the poems that conv█ █ █ █ntlicting feelings. Discuss how Bro█ phonology to conv█ y me█ █ █rasts.
2. Work in p█ █ █ █ █ne poem together, once taking a whole line e█ █ █rc█ █ █ afterwards where you found this second reading cha█
3. █s, read the poem twice, once reading only the longer lines, the █ █ patterns do you notice in the ideas Browning conveys in the dif█
4. Why do you think Browning chose this 'limping' effect in the poem? W█ experience of confronting death?
5. **AS only:** With a partner, create a visual representation of the storm █ at the beginning of 'Porphyria's Lover'. As you work, discuss the simil█ two passages, and what they reveal about the respective speakers' s█

Discussion Questions

1. With your partner, discuss what you understand by the term 'strong m█ characteristics define a person as strong? How do you think ideas of █ Browning wrote his poem?
2. How does this speaker's attitude to death compare with other attitud█ it a credible attitude?
3. This poem was written very shortly af█ █ █o █ng's wife died. In the █ poem as a reflection on the █ █ of █ath, or an attempt at self-jus█ each taking one posi█ █ █ █eloping an argument based on close
4. Are there an█ █ █ █ poem where Browning's sound patterning █

Connectio█

- Dramatic landscapes – 'De Gustibus—', 'Home Thoughts, from Abroad', 'P█
- Eternal love – 'Porphyria's Lover', 'Cristina'
- Heroic action – 'The Lost Leader', 'Porphyria's Lover'
- Journeys – 'Meeting at Night'

The Examination Question: A

Key information: Paper is 1 hour 30 minutes. Spend no less than 45 minutes on poetry questions.

Question specifies the two poems to be discussed. Both poems are printed in the examination paper.

Question will have a clear link to one of the four main focuses of the Poetic Voices:

- The presentation of time
- The importance of place
- How people and relationships are realised
- The presentation of events

Poetic Voice

Remember the Voices', so you speaker presents event or memory below could be that you are has created

- Compare presents Gustibus Abroad

Browning cre eyes, ears and analysis on h *perception of*

Example questions

1. Compare and contrast how Browning presents power in 'My Last Duchess' and 'Porphyria's Lover'
2. Compare and contrast how Browning presents memories in 'Cristina' and 'Home Thoughts, from Abroad'
3. Compare and contrast how Browning presents speakers' emotions in 'The L
4. Compare and contrast how Browning presents journeys in 'Prospice' and 'M
5. Compare and contrast how Browning presents desire in 'The Laboratory' and
6. Compare and contrast how Browning presents places in 'My Last Duchess' a
7. Compare and contrast how Browning presents the speaker's state of mind in Meditation' and 'The Laboratory'
8. Compare and contrast how Browning in on relationships in 'Cristina' and
9. Compare and contrast how P develops arguments in 'The Lost Lead Meditation'
10. Compare and contrast how Browning presents beauty in 'My Last Duchess' ar

What does 'Compare and contrast' mean?

To complete a 'Compare and contrast' essay well, you need to go beyond simply what is different between two poems. Instead, adopt a structured approach whi structural details. Your answer must show you can use linguistic terminology and explore the meanings that Browning creates in his poetry (AO2).

There are two different but equally valid ways of structuring an essay. You should best for you. To illustrate them, think about the question below:

- Compare and contrast how Browning presents the speaker's state of mind i Meditation' and 'The Laboratory'.

Thematic approach

Identify the focus of the question: in this case, 'the speaker's state of mind'.

1. Quickly write out five initial ideas for the poem. They can be quite simple a might think of:

Johannes Agricola	Laboratory
Belief in predestin	Wants revenge
Contempt for others	Sexual arousal
Self-love	Aristocrat in a poisoner
Isolated – voice in his head	Thinks she is better tha
Excitement – thinks he is going to heaven	Excited by power

(NB This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive.)

2. Having done this, you might be able to see one or more points where the sp⬚ this case, you could say both speakers consider themselves superior to othe⬚ from society around them. This can help you organise your ideas.
3. There are also differing features about each speaker's state of mind.
4. You should now focus on the lexical and structural means by which Brownin⬚

Lexical/structural approach

1. Quickly write out five key language features ⬚⬚ ⬚⬚ ⬚ the topic of the ques⬚

Johannes Agricola	Laboratory
Lexical intensity	Sensual imagery
Use of fi⬚-p⬚ ⬚ nouns	Use of imperatives
Repe⬚	Repetition
Alliter⬚ion	Violent language
Verb processes	Alliteration

(NB This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive.)
2. You may see points of overlap here between the speakers, and these might ⬚ your essay.
3. You should then choose your examples and show what they reveal about th⬚

There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, which are summar⬚

	Advantages	
Thematic approach	Deep interpretation of the poems (AO2). Focus on key element of the question.	May risk re⬚ May overlo⬚
Lexical/structural approach	Focus on linguistic features of the ⬚ ⬚ng (AO1). Comparing speci⬚⬚ ⬚⬚re⬚ of the poems.	May risk lo⬚ question. Risk of 'fea⬚

Structuring a co⬚⬚ r⬚⬚ive essay

AO4 is the ⬚⬚⬚e ⬚⬚jective which covers how effectively you structure your ⬚ connections⬚⬚⬚s texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and metho⬚ this assessment objective you must:
1. **make sophisticated and perceptive connections**
2. **cover the poems evenly**

The first point means that you should explore and develop your connections, loo⬚ features and meanings. The second point is important, too. To get more than a L⬚ cover the poems evenly, and if there is a significant imbalance in how much you ⬚

This is not to say examiners will go through and count your words to see whethe⬚ but they will be paying attention. A good tip is not to begin each paragraph writi⬚ keeps your attention on both poems and avoids the risk of writing too much on ⬚

Some students choose to focus first on one po⬚⬚ ⬚h⬚ ⬚ ⬚he other and conclud⬚ comparison at the end. This is not a g⬚⬚ ⬚s ⬚ ⬚⬚gy: you risk running out of time a⬚ and it is very hard to write 'sp⬚⬚i⬚ tica⬚⬚! and perceptive connections' in a single ⬚ out of time to make ⬚n ⬚⬚ ⬚⬚⬚tive comments, you cannot get above Level 1 fo⬚

Introdu⬚⬚⬚s and conclusions

A good introduction does not need to be long: you can set up your essay quite sati⬚
- Sentence 1: define the key term of the question.
- Sentence 2: illustrate the point of connection between the poems.
- Sentence 3: illustrate the key point of difference about each.

Thus, using the question above, we might arrive at an introduction that reads th[...]

Browning explores two deeply corrupted states of mind in 'Johannes Agricola [...] Laboratory'. The intensely egocentric world view of both speakers reveals how [...] from their basic humanity and moral centres. However, while Johannes Agrico[...] complacent inaction, contemptuously looking down on those who he believed a[...] the speaker in 'The Laboratory' rises to a state of extreme excitement and pas[...] power takes shape before her.

In your conclusion, try to draw [...] t th[...] ust important observation you have to m[...]

Browning asks a nu[...] h[...] questions in these poems about how humans are d[...] accepted, [...] co[...]sequences of these needs being left unmet. However, whe[...] see the child[...]selfishness of his philosophy, the would-be poisoner is by far th[...] seems to understand the public performance she is putting on. She ends her p[...] 'dance at the King's', acting out a public role before murdering her rival. Brow[...] truly dangerous state of mind is not the lunatic, but the calculating psychopat[...]

A comparative paragraph

The speakers in both poems exist in settings isolated from normal society, and [...] In 'The Laboratory' the speaker uses religious imagery to describe the room as [...] does not seem horrified at the prospect. Indeed, the choice of the adjectives 'd[...] 'church' suggests she identifies more closely with the poisoner's laboratory than[...] summed up in the deictic expression, 'I am here', a simple sentence defiantly r[...] Agricola is also isolated, yet he refuses to exist 'here' in [...] ame way as the sp[...] believes he can 'look right through [heaven's] go[...] yeb [...] of' and nothing can '[...] to God'. The rejection of the sensual [...] ge [...] 'gorgeous' contrasts with the d[...] 'faint smokes curling white' [...] + [...] speaker believes he does not belong in th[...] restriction im[...]d [...] etaphorical 'roof'.

As this exam[...] shows, while the paragraph begins from a point of similarity, the [...] examples differ.

Dos and Don'ts:

Do
- ensure you are using linguistic terminology consistently
- aim for even coverage of the poems
- use conjunctions to structure your paragraphs: coordinating conjunctions such as 'whereas', 'while' and 'by contrast' are very helpful ways of signposting your comparative points to the examiner
- compare like with like (it's not much use to say, 'Agri[...] uses biblical imagery whereas the speaker in "The [...] or [...] ry" uses frequent alliteration.' Make sure yo[...] t[...] ts [...] e some sort of meaningful connection, eve[...] [...] illustrating a point of contrast)
- use ple[...] f s[...] [...] tations
- cover [...] or poetic, lexical and structural aspects of each poem
- ensure all your points are backed up with detailed analysis of textual examples

Don't
- feat[...]
- mak[...] conn[...]
- sum[...]
- use [...] inac[...]

The Examination Question: A Level

Key information: Paper is three hours long. You should spend 45 minutes on the poetry question (Section C).

You will be given a clean copy of the anthology for the examination. You will not be allowed to use one with an annotations or additional materials.

There is a choice of two questions, answer one of them. The question specifies one poem to write about and you are given free choice for the other poem. Note: you should write about only two poems; including material on extra poems will not help you in any way.

Question will have a clear link to at least one of the four main focuses of the Poetic Voices unit:
- The presentation of time
- The importance of place
- How people and relationships are realised
- The presentation of events

Example questions

1. Examine how Browning presents memories of places in 'Home Thoughts, fro of your choice.
2. Examine how Browning presents dysfunctional relationships in 'My Last Duc your choice.
3. Examine how Browning presents love in 'Porphyria's Lover' and **one** other po
4. Examine how Browning presents others' emotions in 'The Lost Leader' an
5. Examine how Browning presents death in 'Prospice' and **one** other poem of
6. Examine how Browning presents extreme states of mind in 'The Laboratory' choice
7. Examine how Browning presents journeys in 'Meeting at Night' and **one** oth
8. Examine how Browning presents attitudes to morality in 'Johannes Agricola poem of your choice.
9. Examine how Browning presents desire in 'Cristina' and **one** other poem of
10. Examine how Browning presents places in 'De Gustibus—' and **one** other po

Do I need to compare and contrast the poems?

No. Only AO1 and AO2 are assessed on this task, so there is no requirement to co say you cannot: sometimes the best way of expressing a point about one poem i with the other poem, but the question is phrased quite deliberately so you do no comparison throughout. It is better to develop detailed points about one poem t you are trying to make a comparative point.

How much should I write about each poem?

Be aware that you must cover two poems. If you only write about one poem, you̶
for AO2. Therefore, if you are running very short on time in this section of the pa̶
write about two poems.

The mark scheme is clear that to get above a Level 2 you need to select carefully̶
Level 5 mark you should 'make careful selections from̶ ̶p̶ ̶ems'. Try to ensur̶
spending more time on one poem than the other ust̶ ̶ ̶i̶ ̶in one last point will b̶
your time evenly.

Examiners will be ver̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ndidates who spend a few desultory minutes sc̶
poem, and ̶ ̶ ̶rr̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ attention to the one they revised in detail for the rest̶
this trap.

Selecting appropriate poems

Free choice of the second poem for your essay makes selecting an appropriate poem̶
think of two or three options, making brief notes for each, before finalising your cho̶
dispiriting than getting 20 minutes into an essay and realising you have run out of th̶

For example, a question such as 'Examine how Browning presents death…' might̶
thanks to the Duke's famous 'I gave commands / And all smiles stopped together̶
enough other points to fill 20 minutes of writing time? This is not to say that 'My̶
choice – there is plenty of useful material – but it is easy to latch onto the first, n̶
think 10 or 15 minutes ahead.

Planning and selecting ideas

Break down the question to help you formulate i̶ ea̶ ̶ ̶ ̶t will address both asse̶
question:

Examine how Browning prese̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ea̶ ̶ ̶ ̶Prospice' and **one** other poem of your̶

- **Examine**: this te̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶i̶ ̶our task to explain Browning's methods to the e̶
  can us̶ ̶ ̶p̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶linguistic terminology to label the methods and effects̶
  questic̶ ̶ ̶ts you to AO1.
- **Presents**: this should remind you that Browning adopts a *persona* in all his p̶
  understand the voice that Browning is adopting in his poem.
- **Death**: this will be the key thematic focus of the question. You should ensur̶
  this. You can show some imagination in how it is interpreted: for example, i̶
  as 'the event of life ending', whereas in 'Johannes Agricola in Meditation' it̶
  life has ended'. Be clear in your essay how you are interpreting the central t̶
  beginning of each paragraph to signpost to the examiner how your ideas be̶
  This term leads you to AO2.

Writing an introduction

You can write a good introduction in three sentences. The firs̶ should set out the̶
discussion. The first sentence should define how you̶ ̶ ̶ ̶ ̶re̶ the key term of th̶
sentences should illustrate an overview of the̶ ̶o̶ ̶t̶ ̶ ̶ ̶intend to make about t̶
keeping quotations to a minimum at̶ ̶ ̶ ̶st̶ ̶ ̶and avoiding any detailed technic̶
later in the essay.

Browning̶ ̶ ̶death as an event and an existence in 'Prospice' and 'Johan̶
speaker in 'P̶ ̶ ̶pice' is focused on the imagined moment of death, picturing it̶
manhood and sense of self, but resulting in a blissful reunion with his beloved.̶
fixed on the idea of the afterlife, the fulfilment of his destiny by 'speeding' to ̶
rolling in the flames of hell.

Advice for analytical paragraphs

Try to take a single point and expand it in depth. You cannot hope to cover the w[…]
make a few points well.

Agricola imagines not only his own death but the afterlives of those who are n[…]
to go to Heaven. The choice of the present-tense verb 'g[…]' to describe how h[…]
ghastly wretchedness' shows how he pictures the[…] ff[…] g and yet it does no[…]
juxtaposition of 'gaze', which connotes[…] and calm, with 'fierce' further […]
imagines death as a state of l[…] for […]n and of torment for the rest of huma[…]
humans are reduce[…] animals or insects, with the participle 'swarming […]
driven by p[…] e metaphor of 'waves' to describe the fire in hell is horrifying […]
of the sea, e[…]asised by the harsh /g/ consonant of 'ghastly'. Yet Agricola sh[…]
people, evidenced by the metaphor of his being 'full fed / By unexhausted pow[…]
consonants and assonance of 'lie' and 'smiled' convey his complacency and con[…]
enjoy his fate.

Conclusions

Allow time for a conclusion: a conclusion gives you the chance to point out to th[…]
to remember about your essay. It does not need to be long – three sentences ar[…]

What Browning reveals about death in these two poems is that it is a topic wh[…]
to be seen. The lexis of conflict and struggle in 'Prospice' affirms that speaker's […]
fight and endure for the one he loves, while for Johanne[…] ricola death is just […]
delusion which governs his whole existence.

Dos and Don'ts:

Do
- keep q[…]on […]e brief – four or five words is usually more than e[…]
- integrate technical terminology into your analysis: avoid 'feature-spotting'
- show how sound and structural effects emphasise (or call into question) literal meaning
- maintain an appropriate academic style throughout
- ensure you are using linguistic terminology consistently
- aim for even coverage of the poems
- use conjunctions to structure your paragraphs: coordinating conjunctions such as 'whereas', 'while' and 'by contrast' are very helpful ways of signposting your points to the examiner
- cover a range of poetic, lexical and structural aspects of each poem
- ensure all your points are backed up with detaile[…] […]s of textual examples

Don't
- f[…]
- s[…]
- u[…]
- i[…]
- n[…]
- a[…]

Glossary

(Language level is provided in brackets)

Term	Definition
Abstract noun	(grammar) noun referring to ideas and concepts.
Alliteration	(phonology) the repetition of stressed consonant sour... **assonance**.
Allusion	(discourse) a refe... ce ... well-known story or id.
Alveolar	(phon... ...nants formed between the tongue a...
Anaphora	(syntax) beginning a sequence of phrases with the san...
Anadiplosis	(syntax) the repetition of the last word (or phrase) fro... sentence at the beginning of the next.
Anapaest	(prosody) a **foot** consisting of two unstressed syllables...
Anthropomorphism	(semantics) the attribution of human characteristics t...
Appeal to authority	(discourse) adding weight to your argument by sugges... held the same beliefs as you.
Apostrophe	(discourse) the breaking off of a narrative for the spea... such as a part of nature, an inanimate object or an ab...
Arthurian romance	(discourse) a genre of poetry popular in the Middle Ag... Arthur and his knights.
Assonance	(phonology) the repetition of vowel sounds within a li... from **rhyme** in that the consonant sounds are not rep...
Asyndeton	(syntax) a series of clauses ... without any coo... **polysyndeton** and ... ta...
Back vowels	(phone... ... which are articulated near the rea... ...u:/ ('food'), /ʊ/ ('put'), /aʊ/ ('boat'), /ɔ:/ (
Behaviour...	(grammar) see **verb processes**.
Boulomaic ...ity	(semantics) forms of language which express desire
Byronic hero	(discourse) a dashingly handsome, brooding figure dri... rebellious, antisocial and 'mad, bad and dangerous to ... popularised the figure in several of his narrative poem...
Caesura	(prosodics) a break in a line of poetry, usually when a ... commas rarely create caesuras.)
Climax	(discourse) the dramatic high point of a narrative, mar... **intensity** or a sudden change in syntactical structure.
Coda	(discourse) a short passage at the end of a work which... together and rounding off earlier material.
Collective noun	(grammar) a noun that denotes a group of individuals...
Concrete noun	(grammar) a noun referring to ... thing which can b... the senses; cf. **abstract no...**
Conditional clause	(grammar... at ... typically introduced by 'If'.
Conjunction	(...) ... a discourse marker indicating the relations...
Convergei...	(pragmatics) a strategy employed by a speaker to mak... similar to that of the person they are speaking to, ofte... employ in their speech; cf. **divergence**.
Dactylic tetrameter	(prosodics) a line of 12 syllables, arranged in four grou... syllable of each is stressed and the next two unstresse...

Dead metaphor	(semantics) a figure of speech whose figurative effect has been ⋮ point where the metaphorical content of the image has been lo⋮ *running out*').
Deictic centre	(semantics) the place and time a text is 'anchored' to. For exam⋮ conversation between someone in London and someone in Ma⋮ speaker in London said, 'I am going to Manchester next week', i⋮ utterance in London. However, if they said, 'I am coming to Ma⋮ the *deictic centre* of the utterance is located in Manchester.
Deixis	(semantics) lexis whose meaning depends wholly on the contex⋮ words are being uttered, e.g. 'Look at th… … an *over there*' (wh⋮ meaningful only in the spatial co…te. …r …he utterance).
Demonstrative pronoun	(grammar) a pro…c … … to indicate something specific withir⋮
Deontic modality	(se… … forms of language that express what is possible, ob⋮ …fte… in the case of moral, legal or social principles.
Diction	an umbrella term to describe the lexical, phonological and synt⋮ by a poet in constructing a poem.
Direct address	(grammar) speech directed to a specific person.
Direct object	(grammar) the noun phrase which indicates the person or thing ⋮ of the action of a transitive verb, such as 'She laid *her gloves* asi⋮
Divergence	(pragmatics) a strategy employed by a speaker in order to make⋮ less like that of the person they are speaking to; cf. **convergenc**⋮
Discourse markers	(grammar) words and phrases that serve to structure a poem – ⋮ time, mood and place, for example – and indicating the speaker ⋮ elements of the poem relate to one another.
Doxology	(discourse) a short hymn of praise used in Christian services. Th⋮ of words praises the triune God and asserts his eternal power, '⋮ beginning, is now, and ever more sha" h…
Dramatic monologue	(discourse) a poem which r… at … …quence of events. The 'd⋮ arises from the sp… … s … …on as a character within the narr⋮ protagoni…
Dynamic verb	(gr… … … a verb which describes an action; cf. **stative verb**.
Elevated lexis	(pragmatics) lexis which marks the text as particularly formal or ⋮ upper classes.
Elision	(syntax) the omission of words which would ordinarily be includ⋮ elliptical.
End-stopped line	(discourse) a line of poetry which ends in a full stop or other pu⋮ **enjambment**.
Enjambment	(discourse) a line of poetry which 'runs on' into the next line.
Envelope rhyme	(phonology) a stanza in ABBA form.
Epic	(discourse) a form of poetry which recounts extended narrative⋮ the deeds of deities or mythological heroes.
Epiphany	(discourse) a moment of sudden clarity which radically reshape⋮ perception of the world.
Epistemic modality	(semantics) forms of langu… … tl… …press degrees of certainty ⋮ known and the ava… … e … …nce.
Epistrophe	(syntax) … … … …technique where successive clauses end in ⋮ op… … … **anaphora**.
Euphemism	(semantics) the substitution of a mild or indirect word or expre⋮ troubling or taboo idea, such as 'passed away' used as a euphem⋮

Euphony	(phonology) combinations of phonologically pleasing lexis.
Existential	(semantics) see **verb processes**.
Face	an element of **pragmatics** which considers how language can af listener's social status and sense of self.
Figurative language	(semantics) language used not in its literal sense, but to convey meanings, such as in metaphor or personification.
Flashback	(discourse) an interruption in the narrative to relate an earlier eve
Foot	(prosodics) the essential rhythmic unit of a line of poetry. Some syllables (iambs, trochees and spondees n some of three syll amphibrachs and anapaests, am ng t' e s). See **Metrical Feet**
Fragmentary syntax	(syntax) sentences n off or are otherwise incomplete
Frame	(discour s ral device where the main narrative is book m ernal to the immediate subject matter of the story.
Fricative	honetics) consonants such as /f/, /θ/ and /s/.
Generic pronoun	(grammar) a pronoun used to refer to people in general. 'One', can all be used to refer to a hypothetical individual or all people likely to need a good raincoat if you want to climb Snowdon in (
Genre	(discourse) a style or category marked by distinctive lexical and Examples include tragedy, the Gothic and dystopian writing.
Gothic	(discourse) a literary genre associated with violence, death, the transgression.
Grice's maxims	(pragmatics) the linguist Paul Grice accounted for rules of conve in his four maxims. He argued that in order for communication successfully, both parties in a conversation must abide by four speaking too much or too little); quality (honesty, not giving fal information); relation (trying to be relevant); manner (trying to orderly).
Hubris	(discourse) overwhelming arr g nce pical of heroes in tragic unshakeable faith in th r abilities blinds them to the inevi downfall.
Iambic pentameter	(pr n a line of 10 syllables in five pairs where the first sylla ns ssed and the second stressed.
Illocutionary act	(pragmatics) the attempt to accomplish some communicative p a command, making a promise or greeting.
Imperative	(grammar) the mood of verbs used to give instructions.
Implicature	(pragmatics) conveying meaning by using connotations as a pra avoiding taboo or face-threatening topics.
Indefinite article	(grammar) a determiner that introduces a noun phrase and imp to is non-specific, e.g. 'The boy gave me *a* book'.
Intensity	(syntax) the extent to which a speaker's attitude towards a con neutrality. It might be marked, for example, by emotive languag
Interiority	(discourse) the focus on a character's thoughts, feelings and be actions and statements.
Intradiegetic narrator	(discourse) the narrator is thems c acter in the action of therefore, **limited**.
Irony	(semantics) a r rec ated whereby the implied meaning of with t' n meaning of the words. In literary discourse it als ur ve effect of a character's utterances where the reader fferently to how the character intends them to be understood

Juxtaposition	(syntax) the placing of contrasting ideas, images or words next t⬚ to create effects for the reader. Note that juxtaposition is only t⬚ effect. A juxtaposition can have a terrifying, amusing, shocking ⬚ depending on the images offered for consideration.
Latinate lexis	lexis derived from Latin. Latinate vocabulary is often a marker ⬚ associated with abstraction.
Lament	(discourse) an expression of sadness, grief or regret.
Limited narrator	(discourse) the opposite of an **omniscient narrator**. The limited ⬚ know everything that happens in the story – for example, they ⬚ other characters are thinking; cf. **unreliable narrator**.
Linear chronology	(discourse) a narrative where the events are related in the same ord⬚ time; cf. **proleptic narrative** and **flashback**.
Lyric poem	(discourse) usually a short poem, more often concerned with th⬚ thought, mood or feeling than extended narrative.
Melodrama	(discourse) a literary work characterised by sensational action a⬚ display heightened, often excessive emotion.
Mental	see **verb processes**.
Metaphor	(semantics) the substitution of a new idea for the original to illu⬚
Metempsychosis	(discourse) the belief that, after death, the soul passes into a ne⬚ animal or another human.
Metre	(prosodics) the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllable⬚ See also **Iambic pentameter**.
Metonymy	(semantics) the use of a small part of a larger object to represen⬚ For example, a prisoner might be 'behind bars', where the bars ⬚ prison as a whole; cf. **metaphor**.
Metrical ambiguity	(prosodics) the effect of a line of poetry where it is not immedia⬚ are to be stressed, creating a range of p⬚ e meanings.
Mimesis	(phonology) where language imitate⬚ often by means of phon⬚ simple semantic denot⬚ the action itself.
Modality	(grammar) ⬚ ⬚ verbs which indicate a speaker's attitude to ⬚ prin⬚ ⬚dal verbs in English are can, could, may, must, migh⬚ ⬚nc ⬚ould.
Mood	(discourse) the overall effect created in the reader by a passage ⬚
Mood (2)	(grammar) verbs may be indicative (indicating a fact – 'I play ten⬚ (giving an order – 'Pass me the salt') or subjunctive (expressing ⬚ 'Long live the Queen').
Narrative time	(discourse) the perceived pace at which time passes in a narrati⬚ **compress** narrative time (speed it up) to convey rapid action, o⬚ they consider irrelevant material. They may also **dilate** narrativ⬚ point at which an event that takes mere seconds in reality is sp⬚ chapter of prose.
Negative face	(pragmatics) a speaker's desire not to be imposed upon, intrud⬚ put upon.
OE	(lexis) abbreviation of Old English. Refer⬚ ⬚ he dialects of Engl⬚ 1100.
Omniscient narrator	(discourse) a narrat⬚ ⬚ knows everything about the world o⬚ characteri⬚ ⬚ being able to relate to the reader what any cha⬚ an⬚ ⬚
Orientational metaphors	(semantics) a common form of dead metaphor where spatial or⬚ indicate mood: for example, up is linked with happiness and co⬚ rose') whereas down conveys sadness and disappointment ('ou⬚

Parataxis	(syntax) placing short, independent clauses next to each other. [partially obscured] **asyndeton** in that asyndeton omits 'and' or other coordinating [obscured] example of parataxis can be found in lines 2–4 of 'My Last Duch[ess]
Parenthesis	(syntax) a syntactically independent clause which offers an expl[anation/] afterthought placed within a sentence.
Passive voice	(syntax) the opposite of the active voice. The subject of the verb [is one to] whom the verb is happening, e.g. 'Geraint Thomas was cheered [at the] finish line in Paris.'
Pastoral	(discourse) a literary and artistic genre whic[h] represents the co[untryside,] innocence, beauty and freedom fro[m ...]se[ ]corruption.
Pathetic fallacy	(semantics) a technique [where]b[y]the setting (and often the we[ather]) of a character's i[nner mood] (e.g. if someone says 'the leaves da[nce] would inf[er]are happy).
Persona	[(di...] a 'mask' adopted by a poet. The *persona* may be im[agined] [P]orphyria's lover, real, such as Johannes Agricola, or a version [of]
Phonetic patterning	(phonology) the construction of lines of poetry around specific [c]onsonant types.
Plosive	(phonetics) a consonant such as /p/ and /b/.
Polysyndeton	(syntax) a sequence of clauses linked by an unusually high num[ber of] conjunctions.
Positive face	(pragmatics) the desire of a speaker or listener to be liked, app[reciated] appreciated.
Prefix	(grammar) a phoneme bound to the beginning of a word which [ ]
Prelapsarian	(discourse) the state of innocent bliss experienced by Adam an[d Eve before they ate] the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
Present participle	(grammar) the -ing form of a verb. When used in a main clause [it] action.
Prolepsis	(discourse) anticipation of fu[tur]e ev[ent]s.
Proper noun	(grammar) a nou[n whi]ch in [its]primary application refers to a uni[que] Kiddermin[ster]r[ive]rs, Gilgamesh or Apple.
Prosody	[ho]w [stress]and intonation are used in speech.
Prosody (2)	[th]e patterns of stress in poetic language. See **metre**.
Pun	(semantics) a joke exploiting the different possible meanings of [ ] there are words which sound alike but have different meanings
Register	(pragmatics) an aspect of **sociolect** which marks the formality o[f] utterances; cf. **convergence** and **divergence**.
Rhetoric	(discourse) the art of using language to sway an audience, ofte[n] deploying devices such as anaphora and pathos.
Rhyme	(phonology) the correspondence of sound at the end of lines of [ ] include internal rhyme, where sounds are repeated within a lin[e] where similar, but not identical, sounds are employed.
Rhyming couplet	(phonology) the AABBCC, etc. form of rhyme in poetry.
Romanticism	(discourse) a literary genre which flo[ur]i[shed in] European writin[g] eighteenth century and first [de]c[a]de [of t]he nineteenth century. [ ] powerful feelings of i[ndi]vi[dual]experience, often associated wit[h] landscapes [and]epi[c, the]'language of the heart' over the ope[ ] reaso[n]
Second-person listener	[(di]s[co]urse) the 'you' in a poem, especially where the listener be[ ] [w]ithin the fictional scene of the poem, rather than an imagined [ ] reader of the poem.

Semantic field	(lexis) lexical choices that refer to a specific subject.
Sibilant	(phonetics) /s/, /ʃ/, /z/ and /ʒ/ sounds.
Simple past tense	(grammar) a tense used to describe a single event which happe[...] now complete. For example: 'Tom Jones sang a song', 'I turned [...]
Sociolect	(pragmatics) a distinctive dialect proper to a given social class.
Solipsism	(discourse) a form of extreme self-centredness where self-existen[...]
Sound iconicity	(phonology) the use of sound to mirror meaning. This includes, [...] onomatopoeia. The reader perceives a natural resemblance or [...] sound of a lexeme and the object or [...] it refers to in the [...]
Soundscape	(phonology) the overall aural effect [...] poem, considered apar[...] content of its lexis. [...] viewing a painting and looking o[...] of colours [...] the representative content of forms.
Spondee	(p[...]) a **foot** consisting of two stressed syllables.
Stative verb	(grammar) a verb describing a state or condition, such as 'love', [...]
Straw man	(discourse) a rhetorical flaw where a speaker invents a figure ho[...] or improbable views in order to attack that figure and gain supp[...]
Subjunctive	(grammar) the **mood** used to express doubt or a desire, e.g. 'Go[...] 'I wish I were a faster runner.'
Sublime	(discourse) eighteenth-century aesthetics divided experiences o[...] into the beautiful and the sublime. Beautiful landscapes brough[...] tranquillity, balance and ease. Sublime landscapes are vast, dra[...] threatening, to the point that the onlooker might even fear for [...]
Subordination	(grammar) a clause which is dependent on a main clause for its [...]
Syntax	the arrangement of words, clauses and phrases within an uttera[...]
Tone	(semantics) emotions implied by the speaker in their choice of l[...]
Transformative verb	(grammar) a verb denoting a change in [...] It can be transitiv[...] intransitive (increase, slacken).
Trochee	(prosodics) a **foot** co[...] a strong syllable followed by a s[...]
Unreliable narrator	(discourse) [...] whose account of the event of the story c[...] tru[...] y may seek to omit or emphasise certain details in [...] [...] he story that shows them or their interests in a favourable ligh[...]
Velar	(phonetics) a consonant such as /k/, /g/ and /h/, formed at the [...]
Verbal	see **verb processes**.
Verb process	(grammar) verbs are categorised into four main groups. Materia[...] engagement with the physical world. Behavioural verbs chiefly [...] processes. Mental processes represent thinking, feeling and pe[...] processes are to do with speech and communication. Existentia[...] states of being.
Voice	(discourse) a broad term which describes not only the perspect[...] writer in narrating an event (such as third- or first-person), but [...] by the speaker.

List of metrical feet

Two syllables
Trochee (strong–weak): **Tell** me | **not** in | **mour**nf[...] [...]bers (Longfellow)
Iamb (weak–strong): The **time** | of **year** [...] ou [...] | in **me** | be**hold** (Shakespeare)
Spondee (strong–strong): Yet the [...] [...] | must go (Browning)

Three syllables
Anapaest (weak–weak–strong): And the **sound** | of a **voice** | that is **still** (Tennyson)
Dactyl (strong–weak–weak): **Just** for a | **hand**ful of | **sil**ver he | **left** us (Browning)

Suggested Answers

Below you will find brief notes outlining possible responses to the activities set o...
Questions are not covered, their being wholly open-ended for whatever course t...
conversation. Some activities have no expected response and are marked 'Stude...
should always be expected to support their views with cl... ...ference to the lex...
poem under discussion.

1. My Last Duchess

Comprehension Que...
1. He is s... ...he ...y...ent of a dowry when he marries the daughter of the count o...
   the Du...
2. In an upstairs, private room
3. A 'favour', his name; A bough of cherries, a white mule, compliments
4. He ordered the Duchess's murder.
5. Neptune

Individual Activities
1. Deictic utterances include (not an exhaustive list):
   a. 1: 'That's my last Duchess' (pointing at a painting)
   b. 1: the wall (the wall of this room)
   c. 3: 'that piece' (the painting)
   d. 4: 'there she stands' (the portrait on the wall)
   e. 7: 'strangers like you' (indicating the envoy)
   f. 48: 'the company below' (indicating a room downstairs)
2. Students may explore any pauses in the poem. Pauses not indicated by dashes inclu...
   13, 15, 21, 23, 25, 31, 34, 43, 46, 47).
3. Students might comment on the Duke's inability ... ...his temper, his 'staging' o...
   manipulate the envoy, the lack of detai... ...his ...fe's death, or any other relevan...
4. Students may comment on the ... ...the palace, the ostentatiousness of the ...
   exterior. They may lin... ... ...poem's immediate setting, the Duke's references ...
   detail.
5. Other ... ...he Duke breaks include quantity (lines 9–10) and manner (e.g. 48–5...
6. Student... responses. They may focus on how he controls the setting (e.g. the c...
   describing the murder, the politeness features in how he talks to the envoy or any o...
7. Students might take 'Strangers like you' and consider less-threatening synonyms fo...
   other relevant textual detail.
8. Students could focus on the contrast between visual and sensory details, the use of ...
   centres of the poem. More-advanced responses might mention how both settings b...
   performers (the Duke, Porphyria) and audiences (the envoy, the lover).
9. Students' own responses. They might focus on pronoun use, modality, how speaker...
   imagined) or any other relevant approach.

Group Activities
1. Students' own responses
2. Examples of apparently pre-prepared speech include 5–8, 9–1..., 21–23, 37–39, 48–...
   include 31–34, 39–42. Students may arrive at differen... ... ...ons based on their o...
3. Students' own responses. All answers should ref... to ... ...ic details of lexis, syntax ...
4. Students' own responses
5. Students' own responses. In c... ... ...nts find it hard to justify claiming the Duke ...
   term 'imposing' in the ... ...ask them to reflect on how Browning conveys dif...

2. The L... ...ader

Comprehension Questions
1. 'a handful of silver' (a small quantity of money)
2. Powerful members of society
3. The 'great language' refers to Wordsworth's transformation of poetic lexis to make ...
4. The vanguard – the advance party of the army.

5. We will perform great things while he boasts about how little he is saying and doing
6. The leader has sold his soul to the rich and powerful in return for some money and
7. Because it would require them to be dishonest and to doubt themselves.

Individual Activities
1. Students might comment on Wordsworth's political radicalism and early rejection of
2. Milton was a political radical whose works Wordsworth emulated; Burns, too, repre
    power structures in favour of the experience of the common people; Shelley was a
    Romantic movement. All represent what Wordsworth might have been had he not
3. Students' own responses
4. Lines include 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24
5. Examples of epistrophe 4, 5, 13–14. Anaphora examples include 1–2, 15–16, 22
6. Students could write a developed essay. They might consider discussion of strength
    rejection of conventional paths, or any other relevant points.
7. Students might find 'Home Thoughts' an interesting companion here, as both poems

Group Activities
1–3. Students' own responses
4. Both poems end with an image of unity, but one is romantic and the other ideologic
    detailed discussion, focusing on 'let him receive…' and 'I shall clasp thee again'. Som
    Lost Leader' is slightly evasive, offering an attractive hope which spares the speaker

3. The Laboratory
Comprehension Questions
1. In a laboratory where poisons are made.
2. An unnamed man.
3. Pauline and Elise. Both are love rivals.
4. The colour is 'too grim'. She desires a more attractive colour
5. No. She wishes that death 'should be felt' and that 'he of it remain' – in other wo

Individual Activities
1. Students' own responses
2. Students' own responses. Students may discuss ideas of transgression, desire, fasci
3. Students' own responses
4. Students could choose any example of caesura in the poem. Those which are effect
    16, 25 and 41.
5. There are many examples in the poem, and a student could justify their selection of
    effective examples include 8, 10, 18, 37, 40, which all introduce new phonological p
6. The focus of the comparison could begin with time (now) and then move on to diffe
    auditory, sensual). Phonology deserves a paragraph of its own.
7. Desire strongly implies modality as the central focus for the discussion of each poen
    would be an appropriate companion, though 'Porphyria's Lover' and 'My Last Duch
    advanced students might wish to consider different forms of desire and how the dif
    them (e.g. the speaker's insecure desire to be acknowledged and powerful revealed

Group Activities
1–3. Students' own responses
4. Points where the metre is interrupted include lines 3, 6, 21, 31, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40
5. The key difference is activity vs passivity. Students could be directed to explore the
    Laboratory' and the mimetic syntax of 'Porphyria's Lover'.

4. Cristina
Comprehension Questions
1. He believes their soul 'rushed together' / she gave him a look which implies she want
2. The reader / an imagined questioner / a voice in the speaker's head.
3. That a momentary spark of passion can consume all the world's honours and treasu
4. More socially impressive marriage / social achievements. 'Deeper blisses' implies m
5. He believes he has won a part of her soul for himself, but she has failed to take the

Individual Activities

1. Students' own responses. Students may reflect on the eye as a place of refuge, the soul, or any other relevant point.
2. Students' own responses. Examples might include: 25–29, 50–53, 56.
3. Students might discuss lexis of disease and excess, the strategies the speaker uses to signs of social status, or any other relevant point. Other characters who are preoccu Porphyria's Lover and the speaker in 'The Laboratory'.
4. 'Sunk' can be read as contrasting to ideas of possessir ... 's ecret', or suffering f mankind in a state of ignorance. It could be contr ste ... th lexis connoting wisdom
5. Students should write a developed er ... ing lexis, semantics and phonology some of the following points ... e of p ...uns; modality, such as the speakers' belie modality, whereas th e e e ...eives boulomaic modality; use of natural imagery address ... u' ... uems – the imagined listener.
6. The tri ... one of the final stanza is achieved through syntax (short sentences, processe ...st', 'gained', 'hold out'), but the absence of discourse markers reveals poems that might be fruitful companions are: 'My Last Duchess', 'The Laboratory' a

Group Activities

1. Examples include: 10–11, 33, 46.
2–4. Students' own responses
5. Useful poems for comparison include: 'My Last Duchess', 'Porphyria's Lover', 'The L Abroad' and 'Parting at Morning'.
6. There are many possible responses here. Some may argue for the following: 17 (the saving us from being 'sunk'); 33 (the challenge to the imagined audience); 49 (the r with new-found defiance); 57 (the triumphant conclusion).

5. Johannes Agricola in Meditation

Comprehension Questions

1. He believes 'God ordained a life' for him and ma ... th ...cision 'ere he fashion'd st
2. The tree achieves fulfilment and perf ... ds and blooms') but without unders to do so. Agricola suggests he d ...es ... w why God has chosen to bless him, but achievement of perf ...
3. A pun o ... su ... Dissemble.
4. 'His' – ... od s anger is provoked by human sin. (Ironically, surely the only emo is comp ... difference to human activity, since none of it means anything anyway predetermined.)
5. Agricola sees the Christian offerings of sacrifice and praise as cheap 'bargains' to bu for their sins. He could not worship a God who can be so cheaply bought.

Individual Activities

1. Students' own responses. They could be pointed to the novel's interest in how a be moral decay and illegitimate desires. For a shorter passage which could be read and beginning at 'I soon came close upon my brother. ... a Christian's life is one of suffer Robert, has been encouraged by his 'friend' (a mysterious man who claims to be a he is one of God's 'justified') to murder his brother. He has followed his brother up him while he is praying. However, his brother fights back and beats him. Robert ret his brother attacked him, for which the father has the broth ... ried in court. It mak 'Agricola' for the involvement of a second character i ... ... ur ... of the demonic 'frie www.gutenberg.org
2. Examples include: 18, 31, 32, 47, 54.
3. Students' own responses. Th ... ni ... onsider the following potentially fruitful exa
4. Students' own resnc ... x ...ples worth considering include: 5, 11, 15, 33, 48, 56
5. Studen ... co ... ny example in the poem. They could be directed to: 1–2, 1
6. The stu ... ould write a detailed essay. Points of comparison could include: setti time, att ...es to evil, authorial intentionality – how does Browning create charact despise? – use of modality, the speakers' attitudes to passivity and action.
7. Students might choose 'The Lost Leader' or 'Prospice'.

Group Activities

1. Students' own responses
2. Students' own responses
3. Agricola's views could include: 8, 9, 15, 27, 42; others' views could include: 45–47.
4. Students might refer to usage of personal pronouns, comparison with others and fee God's breast.
5. Students' own responses.

6. Porphyria's Lover

Comprehension Questions

1. Pathetic fallacy
2. The lover is male
3. Cold, d[...] se[...]le
4. Porphyr[...]ils such as her resting his head on her shoulder.
5. She was not strong enough, despite how her heart drove her to act, to act freely on world of high society and give herself to the lover.
6. Her head is resting on his shoulder, the reverse of the first part of the poem.

Individual Activities

1. Students' own responses
2. Examples include: 27, 34, 42–43, 46, 54, 53, 55.
3. Students' own responses. They might find the following examples fruitful: 6–7, 12–[...]
4. Porphyria's bare 'white' skin, blue eyes, 'yellow' hair and crimson 'blushing' cheek a[...] provocative behaviour.
5. Students should show that it is a significant turning point in the poem which marks [...] of agency. They may refer to any other details to develop this idea.
6. Students may consider the semantic fields of danger, nature, beauty and threat imp[...] relevant point.
7. Student's own responses. They might discuss the sim[...] ra[...]ve viewpoints and t[...] respective agencies and how this is framed by th[...] na[...]ors; the use of imagery to e[...]
8. Students could focus on the passag[...] u[...] sing and strangling in the poem, foc[...] opening lines of 'Prospice' [...] wo[...] [...]mie companion, offering opportunities to w[...]

Group Acti[...]

1–4. Student[...]esponses
5. Students' own responses. They might consider the difference in perspective here: A[...] imagined future, while the lover is looking back on a past action. They could also loo[...] the speakers with their respective moral selves.

7. Home Thoughts, From Abroad

Comprehension Questions

1. Abroad (Italy)
2. The tiny leaves
3. Whitethroat, swallow
4. The pear tree in the orchard
5. Dew that has formed so heavily on the grass that it is white
6. The buttercups are of no interest to adults: they are fo[...] th[...] [...]dren's enjoyment o[...]

Individual Activities

1. Students' own responses. Th[...]y [...]ay [...] [...]on ideas of fertility, fecundity and rebirth[...]
2. Students' own respon[...] [...] [...]uld develop any of the examples discussed in the [...] ideas.
3. Studen[...]esponses. Students may choose to write about 1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, [...]
4. Student[...]n responses. The following topics are a good starting point: use of deix[...] centres; sound iconicity and how it conveys and constructs emotions; time, such as [...] Thoughts' as a retrospective narrative and 'De Gustibus –' as both retrospective an[...] characters, imagined or otherwise.

5. Students' own responses. They might find the account of Margaret going to visit Be
Breeze in a Sultry Place) powerful and thought-provoking. Margaret, who grew up i
described in the poem, visits a poor woman dying from tuberculosis in a northern n
www.gutenberg.org
6. Students might choose any poem from the anthology as a companion here. The ch
which is ostensibly straightforward, might reveal unreliable mental activity. Studen
details in the setting, the framing exclamation at the start or the imagery associate

Group Activities
1. Students' own responses.
2. A range of responses is possible wher ... ents may find it rewarding to debate the
this a recollection of a ... an idealised vision of a pear tree?
3. Students' re...
4. Studen ... focus on: the absence of an addressee in 'Home Thoughts', the co
significa... the boy and the girl, the 'now' of 'Home Thoughts' or any other rele

8. Meeting at Night
Comprehension Questions
1. 'Startled little waves' – suggesting the speaker's anxiety
2. 'Fiery' – foreshadows the 'spurt' of the match and the ardent love of the man and t
3. A mile and three fields thereafter
4. The 'tap' at the window and the voice 'less loud' than a beating heart.

Individual Activities
1. Examples might include: the moon, the fiery ringlets, the slushy sand, the 'blue spu
2. Students' own responses. They could refer to any of the examples in the chapter ab
3. Sea > Cove > Beach > Field > Farmhouse > Window. The progression conveys the sp
and desire.
4. Students will have a wealth of material to discuss, but mi... directed towards sc
their comparison.
5. Students will need to engage with imag... rn...to succeed here, such as in 'Th
a section of another poem, suc... ...ey of the boy and the girl through the l
Bay of Naples in 'De G...

Group Acti...
1–2. Student... responses
3. Students' own responses. They may discuss journeys, forbidden love, desire, or con
detailed evocation of experience and imagination and Browning's very concise poe
4. Other examples might include Romeo and Juliet, Daisy Buchanan and Jay Gatsby, o
Robert and Elizabeth Browning
5. Students' own responses

9. Parting at Morning
Comprehension Questions
1. A headland or promontory
2. The sun
3. On the sea
4. To the 'world of men'

Individual Activities
1. Students' own responses.
2. Meanings of need might inc... fin... ...a..social, friendship, status. Students can us
their work.
3. Studen... re ... ...s. If they find the brevity of this poem challenging, they mig
'Meetir... ht' as a companion to 'Parting at Morning'.
4. Students... responses. Some may find it helpful to focus on the shift from ambig
hardness and clarity in 'Parting'.

Group Activities
1–3. Students' own responses

Robert Browning 'Poetic Voices' Study Guide for AS / A Level AQA with Recordings   Page 77

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT PROTECTED

10. 'De Gustibus—'

Comprehension Questions

1. The boy and the girl
2. They will fall in love
3. Spring
4. The Apennine mountains, a region of rugged peaks and cliffs
5. The sea, beaches, solitary cypress trees
6. Cannot be seen through
7. That a foreign king has been the victim of a ~~te~~ ~~~~ assassination. She sympath~~~~
8. 'Bloody' Mary I, Queen of England ~~~ 1~~~ to 1558

Individual Activities

1. Student~~~~ re~~~~nses. Students may find it helpful to focus on some of the follo~~~~ audienc~~~~ and imagined); use of pronouns; descriptions of setting; use of pho~~~~ and narrative effects.
2. Students' own responses. Speakers to focus on might include: the Duke, the lady in ~~~~ the hero in 'Prospice', the lover in 'Meeting' and 'Parting'.
3. Students might write about 'Home Thoughts' or 'My Last Duchess'. In the latter cas~~~~ questions of power and how it is constructed in language. Students do not need to ~~~~ find it helpful to discuss specific language levels such as modality, phonology and d~~~~
4. Students' own responses
5. Students' own responses. They could develop any of the points in the chapter abo~~~~

Group Activities

1–4. Students' own responses
5. Students' own responses. As an extension, some might be challenged to consider t~~~~ have undergone as a ground for contrast and comparison.
6. This is an effective way of making students alert to phonolo~~~~ ~~nd~~ phonoaesthetics~~~~ of comparison and contrast.

11. Prospice

Comprehension Questions

1. 'Look for~~~~' o~~~~ ~~~~~~. imperative.
2. Interro~~~~
3. Mist, fo~~~~ow. All convey cold and confusion.
4. Death itself
5. A prize in a jousting tournament. It introduces the semantic field of tournaments ar~~~~
6. He wants to confront death head on with his eyes open.
7. His life was unusually free of 'pain, darkness and cold', but now he must accept his ~~~~
8. Anaphora
9. The beloved – Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Individual Activities

1. Students' own responses
2. Students might choose to write about 'Cristina', 'My Last Duchess' or 'Johannes Ag~~~~ discussions around: use of pronouns, modal shading, prosodic or phonetic features ~~~~ audience (real or implied).
3. Students' own responses. Students might begin by for~~~~ ~~~~ how Browning uses ~~~~ the medieval tournament imagery.
4. Students' own responses. More adva~~~~ ~~~~nts could consider why Browning u~~~~ idea, rather than including it ~~~~ ~~~~ ~~~~e.

Group Activities

1–4. Studen~~~~ ~~~~esponses
5. Students~~~~ initially focus on the violent imagery in both storms, but their represe~~~~ perspective of the person recounting the storm to the reader.

Further Reading

- Bunten, Pete: 'Narrative Structures in Browning's Poetry', e-magazine 57 (2(
- Carter, Ronald and Nash, Walter: *Seeing Through Language: A Guide to the* and Sons, 1990
- Charlton, H B: 'Browning: The Making of the Dramat ', ic', Bulletin of the J
- De Vane, William: *A Browning Handbook*, Ya' , 1 '5'
- Hawlin, Stefan: *Robert Browning 'R* ' *Guides to Literature)*, Routledge
- Jack, Ian: 'Browning's 'Dr a tic ', Browning Institute Studies Vol. 15 (
- Karlin, Daniel: *Bro* ' *treds*, Oxford, 2011
- Kenm la. *owning and Modern Thought*, London, 1939
- Kennec ard and Hair, Donald: *The Dramatic Imagination of Robert Bro*
- Lucas, John: *Student Guide to Robert Browning*, Greenwich Exchange, 2003
- Martin, Loy D: *Browning's Dramatic Monologues and the Post-Romantic Sub*
- O'Sullivan, Andrew: "The Good Minute' in the Poetry of Robert Browning', e
- Paterson, Don: *The Poem: Lyric, Sign, Meter*, Faber & Faber, 2018
- Paterson, Don: 'The Domain of the Poem II: The Poetic Contract', Poetry Rev
- Slinn, E Warwick: *Browning and the Fictions of Identity*, Barnes and Noble, 1
- Stewart, Linsey: "Porphyria's Lover' – a Close Analysis', e-magazine 63 (201-
- Shaw, W David: *The Dialectical Temper*, Cornell, 1968
- Tucker, Herbert F, Jr: 'Browning's Lyric Intentions', Critical Inquiry Vol. 7 No.
- Wagner-Lawlor, Jennifer A: 'The Pragmatics of Silence, and the Figuration of Dramatic Monologues', Victorian Poetry Vol. 35 No. 3 (1997)