

English Poetry Text Essay Template

To read the hidden text ensure that the paragraph symbol on the tool bar is highlighted.

Title

“The poems I like best are those which are about people or feelings I can recognise, or about a world that I know.”

“The poems I like best are those which take me away from the world I know to a new world, full of new experiences.

Explain, with close reference to poetry you have studied this year, which of these two responses is closer to your response.

Insert Title of your essay on the next line down:

Opening Paragraph

- ?? An opening paragraph is designed to grab the attention of your reader and to reveal how you intend to answer the question. It is better not to simply restate the topic but to state clearly and confidently what your position is in response to the topic.
- ?? Your opening paragraph should be short: briefly outline your argument, mention your poets, but don't list all the poems you intend to discuss.

Start your opening paragraph on the next line down:

- ?? Have you addressed the topic? or is it possible to determine the essay topic by reading your opening paragraph?
- ?? Is it clear what your contention is in relation to the question? So, have you made your decision clear to your reader?
- ?? Have you stated simply, what you believe?
- ?? Have you introduced your argument?
- ?? Is it clear which poem(s) and poets you will be referring to in answering the question?
- ?? Does your introduction indicate the direction you will take in the remainder of the essay?

The body of your essay

You are now ready to write the body of your essay

- ?? The body of your essay contains the main points of your argument.
- ?? Each main point is contained in a paragraph which develops that point. The main point is expressed in the topic sentence. Often this is the first sentence in the paragraph.

- ?? The topic sentence is supported by evidence. This may be the subject matter of a poem, the use of imagery, or the music of the words. It is important that you refer closely to the text to support your argument. In a poetry essay quotations are an important means of providing evidence.
- ?? Quotations should be brief, relevant and appropriately included. They must have a purpose which is made clear by what you write. Try to avoid long quotations, a quotation can not argue your case for you.
- ?? You must argue in depth. So, you must have something significant to say in each paragraph.
- ?? The final sentence in each paragraph should link the content of the paragraph to the topic.
- ?? The paragraphs should follow one another in a logical order, linking together and leading to your conclusion.

Start your second paragraph of the next line:

Some questions to ask of each of your paragraphs in the body of your essay:

- ?? Is the topic clear to the reader?
- ?? Does the content flow logically from the preceding paragraph? Does it link to the paragraph which follows?
- ?? Is the content significant, ie does it address the topic? Ask yourself, so what? of each paragraph you write.

Start your third paragraph on the next line

Refer to the questions above after this and each subsequent paragraph.

The conclusion

- ?? Aim for a short, punchy conclusion which sums up your argument.
- ?? Avoid restating everything you have previously said. A list of your main points is repetitive and tedious. A well-selected quotation can add significant punch to your conclusion.

Write your conclusion on the next line:

Some questions to ask of your conclusion:

- ?? Does it follow logically from the body of the essay?
- ?? Is it short and to the point?
- ?? Does it sum up your argument?
- ?? Will it convince your reader that your argument is strong?

Some general observations:

- ?? Write in a plain, unaffected style, ie be yourself, and express yourself clearly.
- ?? Correct spelling, grammar, syntax (sentence structure) are important.
- ?? Try to avoid misspelling the names of characters, places, titles of texts and authors.

- ?? The Harvard system of referencing is explained elsewhere, however for references to poetry they are often more precise if given in terms of lines and verses. The following form is recommended:
- ?? Coleridge, S.T *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part 7, lines 612-613
- ?? Keats, John *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, lines 49-50
- ?? In an essay written under exam conditions you do not need to remember the line numbers. It is enough to simply indicate the name of the poet, and the poem the quotation comes from.

- ?? Never try to pretend that someone else's words are your own. If you think that someone else has made a point in a clear and striking way which you wish to include in your essay, then quote him/her and identify the source. Use the Harvard system and just provide the name in brackets, and date if you know it.

- ?? Observe a standard convention for indicating quotations, book titles... The most common reference system is the author-date system, also known as the Harvard system. For more information about this system see the *Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers* published by the Australian Government Publishing Service
- ?? You can find out more about the Harvard Referencing system by visiting the following website:
<http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/arts/policing/study/referencing.pdf>
- ?? If you would like to test your knowledge of the Harvard system go to:
<http://www.edgehill.ac.uk/tld/student/harvard/>

[Back to main document](#)