

Poem	Good poems to compare to	Narrative (What happens?)	Messages/ Themes (What shared human experiences is the poet exploring? What are they saying about these?)	Context (Are there any details relating to when the poem was written/set that affect the meaning of the poem?)	Structure/Form (Describe the structure and form of the poems – e.g. rhyme, metre/rhythm, stanza form/recognised forms e.g. sonnets. How do these affect the message?)	Language (Powerful images, adjectives, poetic devices, choices of punctuation and their effects on the reader. How do these affect the message? REMEMBER TO INCLUDE KEY QUOTES)
When We Two Parted – Lord Byron	Neutral tones - memory	The speaker separated from someone several years ago and is still struggling to deal with it, especially when he hears his ex mentioned in gossip.	It's hard to get over loss . Memories haunt you. Breaking up with someone can feel like dying .	Byron was well known for having lots of affairs (and yet he mentions the woman having a bad reputation...)	The poem moves through past, present, and future, but he remains unhappy, suggesting long lasting effects of breakup. Poem is also cyclical, starting and ending with the phrase "Silence and tears" – reinforces how difficult it is to get over breakups.	"in silence and tears" – abstract noun silence suggests secrecy of relationship but also lost for words at break up, silence = repeated three times in poem "Pale grew thy cheek and cold,/ colder thy kiss" – comparing lover to a corpse, emphasises death of love, plosives "c" and "k" suggest a bitter tone "They name the before me,/ A knell to mine ear" – when he hears people gossip about her, her name is like a death bell – metaphor = painful memories, breaking up is like grieving, perhaps also shame at them gossiping about her affairs.
Love's Philosophy – Percy Bysshe Shelley	Winter Swans – distance and nature Farmer's Bride – nature and longing Sonnet 29 – nature and longing`	The speaker tries to persuade his loved one "you" to be in a relationship with him.	Love is natural (nature), so we should be in relationships. It's hard to be separated (distance) from your loved one. It makes you experience longing .	Shelley was a Romantic poet. Romantic poets believed that we should pay more attention to emotions and nature, and less attention to logical thinking.	Half Rhymes, "river" "ever", suggest that all of nature is in harmony except for the speaker and his loved one. Two verses, both 8 lines, with seven lines proving that everything is nature is together, and last line being a rhetorical question asking why aren't they together. The contrast helps to make the point more persuasive. Gentle verbs "mingle" "mix" in first verse, contrast with more physical verbs "clasp" "kiss", which suggest increasing desperation of speaker.	"The fountains mingle with the river" – imagery of flowing water emphasises connection, mingle is repeated twice in this verse for emphasis "See the mountains kiss high heaven" – natural imagery becomes more impressive, mountains and sky, imperative "see", plosive in "kiss" suggest increasing passion, kiss is repeated twice in this verse for emphasis (What is all this sweet work worth)/ If thou kiss not me? – what's the point in heaven doing all the hard work of uniting, if you and I don't unite/kiss? Rhetorical question, designed to persuade, all words in last line are monosyllabic = punchy
Porphyria's Lover – Robert Browning	Farmer's Bride – desire Eden Rock - death	A man sits in his cottage on a stormy night. Porphyria arrives and makes his cottage warm. He ignores her at first then when he is sure she loves him he kills her by strangling her with her own hair. He opens her eyes and sits with her for the rest of the night.	Desire can drive you to do crazy things. Death can preserve a loved one.	Porphyria is a disease that can result in madness. Porphyria and speaker are from different classes. In Victorian times, when this was written, women were expected to behave more modestly than they do now.	Poem = one single stanza and a dramatic monologue, suggesting disorganised, rambling mind of speaker. Irregular ABABB rhyme scheme reinforces this Dramatic monologue (like Farmer's Bride), which gives the woman no voice, emphasising male power in this relationship.	"the sullen wind was soon awake,/ and tore the elm-tops down for spite" pathetic fallacy creates a threatening atmosphere, personification of wind using adjective "sullen" (like speaker) waking up and tearing down the elms for "spite" could foreshadow what is to come in the poem as the speaker kills his lover for spite. "her smooth white shoulder bare" – desire, adjective white = innocence and purity, adjective bare = counter to expectations of women in Victorian times "Too weak... to set [her] struggling passion free/ from pride" Not strong enough to break away from her social class, her "pride", and come and live with him. Plosives, "p", and alliteration suggest bitter tone, draw attention to passion, in her, but also suggests he feels passion "That moment she was mine, mine" – repetition, possessive, madness

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Sonnet 29 – Elizabeth Barrett Browning	Letters From Yorkshire – distance and nature Winter Swans – distance and nature Love's Philosophy – nature and longing	The speaker tells her lover that she thinks a lot about him and that she is worried her thoughts will start to cover up the reality of what he is actually like. She asks her lover to be with her so that she can get rid of her thoughts and have the real version of him.	Being apart (distance) is hard and leads to longing for your partner. Thoughts are a powerful force, like nature .	This sonnet is part of a series of sonnets EBB wrote about her future husband, Robert Browning. EBB's father didn't approve of Robert Browning so they had to spend a lot of time apart.	Petrarchan sonnet, Usually structured with 8 (octave) lines, which present a problem, followed by 6 lines (sestet) which offer a solution. The turning point where the solution starts is called the volta. In this poem, the volta comes early, suggesting that the speaker is impatient for a solution. Sonnets are usually about love.	"my thoughts do twine and bud/ about thee" – verb twine suggest thoughts wrapping around speaker's lover and covering him, twine and bud suggest thoughts almost have life of their own like a vine, enjambment reflects the twisting movement of the vine "Rather, instantly/ Renew thy presence" – speaker commands her lover to appear, alliteration "r" draws attention to imperative verb "renew", together with adverb instantly, suggests desperation and impatience "I do not think of thee – I am too near thee" – final line resolves problem, if she is with lover, she doesn't need to depend on thoughts/imagination because she has him with her, repetition and dash emphasise the contrast
Neutral Tones – Thomas Hardy	Winter Swans – nature and struggling relationships/ loss When We Two Parted - loss	The speaker looks back on a memory of walking with an ex by a pond, just before the two of them broke up. At the end of the poem he says that every time he has a bad experience with love, he remembers the walk and the landscape they were in.	It's hard to get over loss . Memories haunt you. Breaking up with someone can feel like dying .	Hardy faced many disappointments in his personal relationships (and would go on to face even more after <i>Neutral Tones</i> was written and published). It is unclear whether this poem refers to a specific relationship he had or whether it is a more generalised feeling about his associations with women.	Cyclical – starts and ends with the same images, reflects how he has been repeatedly hurt by love and how his memories keep haunting him, taking him back to the painful memory by the pond. The tone becomes progressively more bitter, with the repetition of and adding pace to the last two lines, and the description of the sun changing from "chidden of God" (told off by God) in the first verse, to "God-curst sun" in the last verse.	"a few leaves lay on the starving sod" nature reflects their relationship, the leaves are dead, the earth is dying, like their love. Alliteration used to emphasise verb lay, suggesting depressing stillness, and the adjective starving, suggesting not only death, but suffering in the process – reflects suffering of a break up. Semantic field of death or dying "ash", "grey", "starving", "deadest" reflects the death of the relationship. Noun ash is a tree, but also symbolic of something dead and bruned "The smile on your mouth was the deadest thing" - keeping up appearances of liking each other by smiling, but not able to hide the fact that the love between them has died. Superlative deadest, emphasises the death of their love.
The Farmer's Bride – Charlotte Mew	Porphyria's lover – desire Neutral Tones – nature and distance Winter Swans – nature and distance Letters From Yorkshire – communication and nature	A farmer has been married for three years but this bride is frightened of him and other men, and prefers nature to him. By the end of the poem the farmer seems increasingly unable to resist his physical attraction to his wife.	Desire can drive you crazy. Nature can be a reassuring presence. Communication is important in a relationship.	At the time the poem was written, women tended to have less control over relationships than they do today. It is thought that Charlotte Mew may have been a lesbian at a time when this was not as accepted by society, which might explain the tone of longing and frustration in the poem.	The tone moves from sorrowful "like the shut of a winter's day,/ her smile went out" to frantic and frustrated "her eyes, her hair, her hair!" repetition and exclamation mark suggesting the effect that years of rejection have had on the farmer. Dramatic monologue (like Porphyria's Lover), which gives the woman no voice, emphasising male power in this relationship.	"more's to do, / At harvest time than bide and woo" – farmer has practical and unromantic approach to marriage, didn't take time to "woo" (verb) his wife and consider her needs. "We caught her, fetched her home at last/ And turned the key upon her, fast." The whole village, pronoun "we", helped to lock her up, showing male power over women, comma, alliteration "f" and rhyming couplet (last/fast) emphasises adverb fast, which here translates as securely – bride had no chance of escape Repeated use of similes to compare bride to a "hare", "mouse" and "leveret" (baby hare) – all swift and shy animals, reflecting how difficult the farmer finds it to get close to his bride.

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Walking Away – C. Day Lewis	Mother, Any Distance – getting older Follower – contrasting independence with dependence	A father is remembering watching his son walk away from him with a group of friends and reflecting on how this made him feel.	Watching your child getting older and move away from you (distance/independence) is hard. As you grow older, you want to move away from your parents (distance), but there's a risk of failure and the process being hard.	This poem was dedicated to the author's first son, Sean.	After exploring difficult emotions throughout poem, the parent reaches a sense of resolution at the end – “love is proved in the letting go” ABACA rhyme scheme, repeated A rhyme shows close bond between parent and son.	“Like a satellite/ wrenched from its orbit, go drifting away”, juxtaposition of verb wrenched and verb drifting emphasises the contrast with what the father is feeling, pain, and what the son is doing, casual movement away “eddying away/ Like a winged seed loosened from its parent stem” another simile this time suggesting the natural process of moving away from your parents, verb eddying suggests a slow, gentle movement away Semantic field of suffering “wrenched”, “scorching” “gnaws” suggests process of growing up is hard for both parent and child, verb gnaws suggests the pain is long lasting and persistent
Letters From Yorkshire – Maura Dooley	Farmer's Bride — communication and nature Sonnet 29 – longing and distance	A man is working in his garden, sees some lapwings and writes to the speaker about it. She wonders if his life in the country is better than hers, in the city. She thinks about his letters and how they make her feel happy and connected to him.	When we are in a city, we can experience longing for the simpler life of the countryside and for nature . Communication can help to make longing , or missing things less painful.	Maura Dooley lived in Yorkshire and the countryside before moving to London, so she may be reflecting on her own experience of missing the countryside.	Three line stanzas make poem look disjointed, could reflect separation from man and unity (contrasting with couplets, which suggest unity). The first three stanzas focus on the differences between the speaker and the man. However, the last stanza emphasises how communication (though letters) is keeping them connected	“his knuckles singing/ as they reddened in the warmth” even though it's cold, the verb singing suggests that the cold is enjoyable “me...feeding words onto a blank screen” meanwhile, the author has a more depressing routine, with the adjective blank conveying emptiness “Is your life more real because you dig and sow?” question – author is doubting the value of her existence “pouring air and light into an envelope” metaphor suggesting that his letters give her life, air and light. Verb pouring suggests that the letters are full of positivity.
Eden Rock – Charles Causley	Climbing My Grandfather – memories, supportive family relationship Follower – supportive family relationship, Sonnet 29 - longing	The speaker imagines his parents being young again, having a picnic on the other side of a stream. They have set a place for him at the picnic. The beckon to him to cross the stream.	When people die you can become nostalgic and really savour the memories of when they were alive. Distance limits you to imagining or remembering the people you are separated from and can lead to longing Parents (family relationships) can be a reassuring and supportive presence in your life and can be a focus for admiration .	Charles Causley was 7 when his father died. He may be talking about his own parents and experience of loss in this poem.	The last line is separated from the rest of the stanza, which reflects the speaker's separation from his parents. Poem has a regular structure and rhyme scheme, reflecting the steady and secure relationship between parents and child.	“her hair, the colour of wheat, takes on the light” – image suggests a halo, parents could be dead, son may admire mother to point of being angelic, the noun wheat suggest a wholesomeness and security in the mother “the sky whitens as if lit by three suns” another heavenly image, verb whitens suggests the purity of their relationship, three suns suggest brightness and give positive tone, the number three, repeated earlier in the poem, reflects the speakers desire to be reunited with his parents “Leisurely,/ They beckon to me from the other bank.” Although the family wish to be together, there isn't the frantic longing of other poems, this desire is relaxed, as suggested by the adverb leisurely, the pause caused by the enjambment, also emphasises the relaxed way in which the parents call the son over

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Follower – Seamus Heaney	<p>Before You Were Mine – admiration which fades with time</p> <p>Climbing My Grandfather – supportive adult</p> <p>Mother, Any Distance – distance and not letting go</p>	The speaker describes his father ploughing and how he struggled to follow him around the field, wanting to be like him. At times the father would pick him up. The final lines skip to the present tense, where the father is now weak and old.	<p>When you are young, you tend to see your parents as perfect and admire them. As you and they get older, you realise that we are all human and not perfect. Parents (family relationships) can be a reassuring and supportive presence</p> <p>As you grow older, you want to move away from your parents (distance)</p>	<p>Seamus Heaney grew up in Northern Ireland on his father's farm.</p> <p>When he was older, Heaney became a poet, not a farmer.</p>	<p>Poem moves from admiration through to disappointment/frustration: "But today/ It is my father who keeps stumbling/ Behind me, and will not go away." Role reversal, no longer a sense of admiration, frustrated tone, connective "but" highlights contrast, repetition of verb stumble, now used with father</p> <p>Regular structure and rhyme scheme, ABAB reflects the smoothness of father's movements.</p>	<p>"His shoulders globed like a full sail strung" simile suggests admiration for his physical strength, adjective globed emphasises size of his shoulders and strength, first in a series of nautical images reflecting the smoothness of his expert movements</p> <p>"An expert." Fragment, punch, admiration</p> <p>"he rode me on his back/ Dipping and rising to his plod." Supportive parent, verbs dipping and rising linking to nautical imagery, like riding up and down waves, enjambment, again, reinforcing smoothness of his actions.</p>
Mother, Any Distance – Simon Armitage	<p>Follower – distance and not letting go</p> <p>Walking Away – getting older</p>	A mother comes round to help her son measure up a house. He moves up the stairs with one end of the tape measure while she stays downstairs. The last scene is him reaching for a hatch in the attic, with a suggestion that he is going to leave through it.	<p>Parents (family relationships) can be a reassuring and supportive presence</p> <p>As you grow older, you want to move away from your parents (distance), but there's a risk of failure.</p> <p>Watching your child getting older and move away from you (distance/ independence) is hard.</p>	<p>Growing up and leaving home is a universal experience that people usually find hard. Nowadays, many young people stay home for longer because they can't afford to buy their own house, so moving out can be a significant moment.</p>	<p>Verse 1 starts with Mother, noun describes their relationship, suggests closeness. 2 = pronoun you, less close, still implies the other person is there and part of the conversation. 3 = I, first person singular pronoun suggests independence from mother.</p> <p>15 lines and the fact that this poem comes from an anthology full of sonnets suggests this is a sonnet with an additional line. Sonnets are usually about love, so is Armitage expressing his love for his mother whilst also moving away from her through the additional line, to fall or fly?</p>	<p>"unreeling/ the years between us. Anchor. Kite." Enjambment reflects the distance between them growing. Fragments draw attention to metaphors, anchor = security but also restriction provided by mother, kite – could symbolise sun wanting to fly free but still needing security of string to fly well. Both images and tape measure could link to idea of an umbilical cord/close bond between mother & son</p> <p>"your fingertips still pinch/ the last one-hundredth of an inch" verb pinch suggests mother finds it hard to let go and this is uncomfortable for son</p> <p>"a hatch that opens on an endless sky/ to fall or fly" suggests growing up is risky, alliteration draws attention to fall or fly - could suggest a fledgling bird leaving the nest, mother would become 'empty-nester'</p>
Before You Were Mine – Carol Ann Duffy	<p>Walking Away – getting older</p> <p>Follower – admiration that fades with time</p> <p>Eden Rock – fond memories</p> <p>Sonnet 29 – imaginary person versus reality</p>	The speaker uses photos and her imagination to visualise her mother before she was born, maybe using stories the mum told. She also has some fun memories of her mum after she was born, but not many. She states that she wishes her mum was as fun as she was before the speaker was born.	<p>Getting older can be hard for a parent too</p> <p>As your parents get older, you might admire them less</p> <p>People can seem more exciting in your imagination than in reality</p>	<p>This poem is autobiographical – Duffy is writing about her own personal experiences.</p> <p>Duffy was born in 1955, at a time when women were expected to take on most of the childcare, limiting their time to go out and have fun.</p>	<p>Poem begins and ends with mother on pavement. In verse 1, she is with friends, in verse 4, with daughter. Emphasises the change in her life.</p> <p>Poem ends with poem's title, to further emphasis the difference in the mother (see language column).</p>	<p>"before you were mine" is repeated to emphasise the difference between then and now. Possessive pronoun mine emphasises how speaker sees mother as hers.</p> <p>"Marilyn." Fragment located at end of first line, emphasises name of celebrity famous for being glamorous but also for committing suicide. Perhaps reflecting the mother's own glamour but also the sad death of the "fun" version of her mum.</p> <p>"you sparkle and waltz and laugh" repetition of 'and' and group of 3 emphasises how many fun qualities the other had before, verb sparkle makes her seem exotic, like Marilyn.</p>

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Winter Swans – Owen Sheers	Sonnet 29 – distance Neutral Tones – distance and nature Letter From Yorkshire – distance and nature	A couple walk around a lake after bad weather, not talking to each other. Their relationship is troubled. They watch two swans separate and reunite. Their hands seem to have joined as they watched.	Nature can be a guide for how to behave in our own relationships. Relationships can survive difficult times and emotional separation (distance).	Winter Swans was published in a collection called Skirrid Hill. “Skirrid” comes from the Welsh word for divorce or separation.	After 6 stanzas of 3 lines, reflecting separation, the last stanza has two lines, reinforcing the way the couple have reunited. The swans in the middle of the poem provide a turning point from the images of silence and suffering in the first stanzas, and they inspire the couple to reunite in the final stanzas.	“The clouds had given their all – “ pathetic falacy, nature reflecting the troubled relationship, dash emphasising the sense of separation between them “they halved themselves in the dark water,/ icebergs of white feather, paused before returning again” verb halved, suggests that they were one before, you cannot be any closer than one, noun icebergs and adjective white, suggest purity of the relationship, both lines reflect the emotional journey that the couple go through “Our hands../ folded, one over the other, like a pair of wings settling after flight” simile suggests they are reunited, link to swans through wings suggest the couple are now like the swans, verb settling is soothing and comforting suggesting a healed/healing relationship
Singh Song! – Daljit Nagra	Before you were mine – rebelling against parents Farmer’s Bride – contrasting fulfilment with longing Follower – contrasting admiration with mocking parents Sonnet 29 – romantic fulfilment	A British Indian man who works in a corner shop keeps sneaking out to spend time with his new wife. Customers complain that he is running the shop badly. When the shop is shut, they spend time together talking.	The poem challenges stereotypes about British Indian people. Romantic love and fulfilment is more important than work. Not all people blindly admire and respect their parents.	Daljit Nagra’s parents emigrated to Britain from India – the experiences of immigrants in Britain influence Daljit’s poetry.	Like a song with verses and a chorus, which make the tone lively and cheerful. At the end of the poem, the pace slows down and turns into dialogue, to emphasise the closeness and intimacy of the couple at this point.	“vee have made luv/ like vee rowing through Putney” simile highlights how much they enjoy each other physically and challenges stereotype of British Indian people being reserved/polite “my bride/she effing at me mum” again, shocking image challenging stereotypes of British Indian people respecting parents, line break adds dramatic pause and emphasises contrast between positive connotations of a bride and swearing “My bride/ tiny eyes ov a gun/ and di tummy of a teddy” bride both dangerous and cute, playful language suggests affection, repetition of noun bride and possessive pronoun my emphasises his attachment to her
Climbing My Grandfather – Andrew Waterhouse	Follower – family relationships and admiration Eden Rock – nostalgic memories and admiration Before You Were Mine - admiration	The narrator imagines himself climbing his grandfather, as if his grandfather is a mountain. He weaves memories of his grandfather into the image of him as a mountain.	As you grow older, you get to know family members better. Parents (family relationships) can be a reassuring and supportive presence in your life and can be a focus for admiration . Memories of people can become nostalgic.	Andrew Waterhouse was a concerned environmentalist. He uses his love of nature to inform his imagery.	Enjambment imitates the motion of climbing. Shape of poem, one verse, could look like a mountain. The poem follows the speaker’s progress up the mountain from bottom to top. As he gets higher, he seems to be getting to know his grandfather better, through his “scar”, line 11, his “pupil”, line 19, and his “heart”, last line.	“I decide to do it free, without a rope or net” suggests trust in grandfather, the verb decide suggests that the speaker has made a conscious decision to take a risk “the skin on his finger is smooth and thick/ like warm ice” oxymoron warm ice contrast with ice, emphasises how warm and comforting the grandfather is, simile “the slow pulse of his good heart” adjective slow makes grandfather seem gentle and stable, metaphor “good heart” reinforces the kindness of grandfather and how son has got to know him as a person, monosyllabic phrase reflects beat of heart