

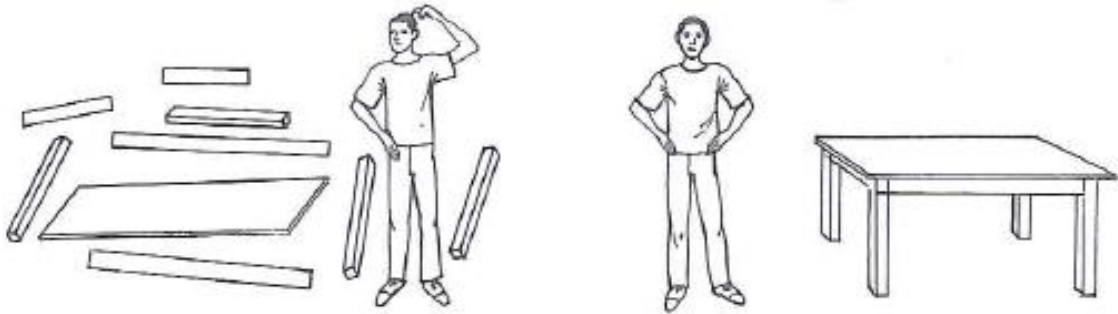
POETRY

HOW TO ANALYZE POETRY

► WHAT IS POETRY?

POETRY, or **VERSE**, as it's sometimes called, is just another way of telling a story, or trying to communicate a message. Usually, poems use fewer words than **PROSE** 散文體, so each word becomes more important and has to do more 'work', making the poet's **DICTION** 措詞, or choice of words, very important.

► HOW IS POETRY DIFFERENT FROM PROSE?



POETRY

PROSE

One useful way of looking at poetry is to think of buying furniture. You *could* buy a completed table like the man in the picture. Most of the work has been done for you, as the large, heavy table comes already put together. Or you could choose to buy a table from IKEA and bring it home yourself in a box, but then you have to assemble the table on your own, using all the pieces the company has given you. Understanding a poem is like making the IKEA table; it's more compact, and you must put it together yourself. This is one thing which makes poetry 'difficult': *you* have to do some of the work!

However, the *only* real difference between poetry and prose is **HYPERBATON** 倒置法 or special, poetic word order. Look this poem by Lewis Carrol, *Brother and Sister*:



'POETRY' VERSION

"Sister, sister, go to bed! **A**
Go and rest your weary head." **A**

3 Thus the prudent brother said. **A**

"Do you want a battered hide, **B**
Or scratches to your face applied?" **B**

6 Thus his sister calm replied. **B**

'PROSE' VERSION

"Sister, sister, go to bed!
Go and rest your weary head."

The prudent brother said (~~thus~~).

"Do you want a battered hide,
Or scratches applied to your face?"

His sister calm(ly) replied (~~thus~~).

prudent: 謹慎

battered hide: 受傷的皮膚

(to) apply to: 搽

- 9 "Sister, do not raise my wrath. **A**
I'd make you into mutton broth **A**
As easily as kill a moth". **A**
- The sister **raised her beaming eye B**
And looked on him indignantly **B?**
And **sternly answered, "Only try!" B**
- Off to the cook he quickly ran. A**
"Dear Cook, please lend a frying-pan **A**
To me as quickly as you can." **A**
- And wherefore should I lend it you?" B**
"The reason, Cook, is plain to view. **B**
I wish to make an Irish stew." **B**
- "What meat is in that stew to go?" **A**
"My sister'll be the contents!" **B**
21 "Oh." **A**
"You'll lend the pan to me, Cook?" **C**
"No!" **A**
- 24 Moral: Never stew your sister.
- "Sister, do not raise my wrath.
I'd make you into mutton broth
As easily as kill a moth"
- The sister raised an angry eyebrow
And looked on him indignantly
And **answered sternly, "Only try!"**
- He quickly ran off to the cook.**
"Dear Cook, please lend a frying-pan
To me as quickly as you can."
- And why should I lend you one?"**
"It's easy to understand, Cook.
I want to make an Irish stew."
- "What meat will you put in the stew?"
"I'm going to use / cook my sister!"
"Oh"
"Will you lend the pan, Cook?"
"No!"
- Moral: Never stew your sister. (to) stew: 燉; 讓某人生氣
- raise my wrath: 讓我憤怒
mutton broth: 羊肉湯
moth: 蛾
indignantly: 憤怒地
sternly: 嚴正
Irish stew: 愛爾蘭燉肉

The poet chose this word particular ordering of words to achieve the rhymes at the end of the lines, and (you may agree) to make the poem *sound* more interesting, and he also uses MUCH TOO FORMAL - and therefore silly - **DICTION**. *Most* small boys, girls and domestic helpers don't speak this way! Carroll is hinting that this is not a true story.

► WHAT DOES 'ANALYZE' MEAN?

ANALYZE [分析] simply means examining something by taking it apart, to see what it is made of, and understanding how it has been put together. When teachers or examiners ask you to analyze a poem, they are asking you to *understand* it and then *show* how well you understand it by *explaining* it back to them.

► HOW DO I ANALYSE A POEM?

Here are the simple steps to analyzing ANY poem:

► FIRST, READ FROM THE TOP, DOWN.



You, the reader, looking at any poem for the first time, are like the eagle in this picture: you are looking down on the main, the most obvious features: the **TITLE** and the **NARRATIVE** [故事], which ought to lead you naturally to the **MESSAGE**.

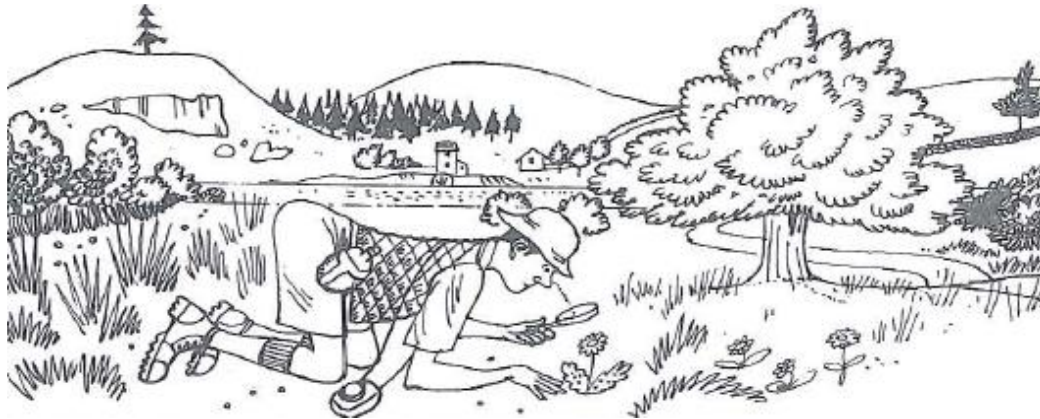
STEP #1: FINDING THE NARRATIVE OF THE POEM

Most poems *do* contain a story. Work out what ‘happens’ in the poem.
 Who are the **CHARACTER(S)**?
 What do they **SAY**?
 What do they **DO**?

STEP #2 FINDING THE MESSAGE OF THE POEM

What is the poet trying to communicate in their poem? Poets usually say very simple, perhaps even obvious things, such as ‘Love is Wonderful’ or ‘War is Terrible’, but they say they those *simple* things in *complicated* ways. If the message is too obvious, readers won’t be interested. Reading a poem is like going on a journey: the view along the way is often more interesting and more important than where you finally arrive at!

A good poem should surprise you; after reading it you ought to think, “I’ve never thought of “it” like that before!” Whatever “it” is!

► SECONDLY, READ FROM THE BOTTOM, UP.**STEP #3: FIND & EXPLAIN HOW THE POET’S “TECHNIQUES” (OR “DEVICES”) HELP CONVEY HER / HIS INTENDED MESSAGE.**

Like the naturalist in the picture above, you next have to take a very narrow view, finding each of the **DEVICES** used, and **EXPLAIN** how those techniques help to express what the poet wants to say.

Another way of looking at this is comparing a poet to a golfer with a bag of golf clubs. Golfers must get around an 18-hole golf course with the fewest number of shots, so they need a large selection of clubs to play an appropriate shot at each hole. Of course, every hole, every course, and even every round of golf is a different, unique challenge, so a skilled player needs lots of clubs (or techniques)!

► WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON POETIC “TECHNIQUES” OR “DEVICES”?

While any particular poem will only ever *use some* of these features, the most important ones are starred:

★ **§1. ALLITERATION 頭韻:** Repeating the same **CONSONANT [子音] SOUND**.

EXAMPLE: “Only the stuttering rifles’ rapid rattle
 Can patter out their hasty risons”

- *Anthem for Doomed Youth* (Wilfred Owen)

USE: Here, the First World War poet Wilfred Owen is using alliteration to *show us* the rattling sounds of a machine gun.

★ **§2. ASSONANCE 韻音:** Repeating the same **VOWEL [母音] SOUND**.

EXAMPLE: “The students dr**ow**sed and dr**ow**ned
 In the teacher’s ponderous m**on**otone –
 Limp bodies l**oo**ping in the w**or**dy heat,
 Melted and run together, desks and flesh as one,
 Sw**oo**ning and swimming in a sea of dr**o**ne.”
 - *Bird in the Classroom* (Colin Thiele)

USE: Here Thiele is trying to convey the sound of a boring teacher droning on and on in front of his sleepy students none of who is listening to a word he says.

★ §3. **ATTITUDINAL IRONY** 姿勢的反語: Saying something you don’t mean as a way of **SATIRIZING** [挖苦] making fun something or someone or **CRITICIZING** it.

EXAMPLE: “Does it really matter losing your sight?
 There’s such splendid work for the blind;
 And people will always be kind”
 - *Does It Matter* (Siegfried Sassoon)

USE: To (usually) argue the *opposite* of what you *seem* to be saying. Here, Sassoon does not seriously suggest that losing your eyesight, or even your mind, does not matter – of course it does. What he is attacking is what he saw as British society’s neglect of the men who were horrifically injured in World War I.

§4. **DIALOGUE / MONOLOGUE** 對話 / 獨角戲: Including a character’s actual words.

EXAMPLE: “The most unusual thing I ever stole? A snowman.
 Midnight. He looked magnificent; a tall white mute
 beneath the winter moon. I wanted him, a mate
 with a mind as cold as the slice of ice
 within my own brain. I started with the head.”
 - *Stealing* (Carol Ann Duffy)

USE: This poem is an example of a **DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE**, as Duffy is actually creating a fictional character, i.e., a burglar who is explaining to us why he enjoys stealing things. Carol Ann Duffy is *not* a man, or a burglar!

★ §5. **DICTION** 措詞, 用語: A poet’s deliberate, careful choice of one word over another, similar word or words.

EXAMPLE: “They **fuck you up** your mum and dad
 They may not mean to, but they do
 They fill you up with the faults they had
 And add some extra, just for you.”
 - *This Be the Verse* (Philip Larkin)

USE: Here, the poet’s purpose is to express his anger and to shock readers. Ask yourself how he could have achieved this by using less angry, less taboo words or expressions, such as “*mess you up*” or “*screw you up*”.

★ §6. **ENJAMBMENT** 詩句之連續: When the sense (or even a sentence) ‘runs on’ from one line to the next line. When the sense or meaning stops at the end of a line, perhaps because of punctuation, that is called an **END-STOPPED LINE**. Where the sense continues to the next line, that line is called a **RUN-ON LINE**.

EXAMPLE: **Miss Walls would tell us how**
The daddy frog was called a bullfrog
And how he croaked and how the mammy frog
Laid hundreds of little eggs and this was

Frogspawn.

- *Death of a Naturalist* (Seamus Heaney)

USE: All these lines RUN-ON. Here, enjambment is used to convey a small boy's enthusiasm and excitement over a primary school science lesson.

§7. **HYPERBOLE** 修辭的誇張法: A large exaggeration for effect, e.g. "I would do anything for you" or "You never listen to a word I say!" These sentences are **LOGICALLY** and **LITERALLY** impossible.

EXAMPLE:

"I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze"

- *To His Coy Mistress* (Andrew Marvell)

USE: Here, the poet is telling the woman he loves (but may not love him back) that if he had endless time, thousands of years until the end of the world, he would wait patiently, gazing at her lovingly.



§8. **METAPHOR** 隱喻: A way of directly comparing two things by saying that A is B, e.g. "My sister is an angel!" **FIGURATIVELY** but not **LITERALLY**.

EXAMPLE:

"The sea is a hungry dog,
Giant and grey.
He rolls on the beach all day.
With his clashing teeth and shaggy jaws
Hour upon hour he gnaws
The rumbling, tumbling stones,
And 'Bones, bones, bones, bones!'
The giant sea-dog moans,
Licking his greasy paws."

- *The Sea* (James Reeves)

USE: Here, Reeves uses a clever comparison (the sea = a large, energetic dog) to make us see something familiar in a new and surprising way. Compare to §17. **SIMILE**.

§9. **METONYMY**: A word or phrase that is used to stand in for another word. Sometimes a metonymy is chosen because it is a well-known characteristic of the word.

One famous example of metonymy is the saying, "**The pen is mightier than the sword**," which originally came from Edward Bulwer Lytton's play *Richelieu*. This sentence has two examples of metonymy:

- The "pen" stands in for "the written word."
- The "sword" stands in for "military aggression and force."

Compare to §18 **SYNECDOCHE**: It is easy to confuse synecdoche and metonymy because they both use a word or phrase to represent something else. They could also both be considered **METAPHORS** because the word or words used are not taken literally. However:

- A **SYNECDOCHE** uses *part* for the *whole* or the *whole* for a *part*.
- A **METONYMY** is a substitution where a word or phrase is used in place of another word or phrase.

§10. **NONCE WORDS** 臨時造出的詞語: Made-up words, used only in a particular poem, although some nonce words may become REAL words later.

EXAMPLE: “A **millionbillionwillion** miles from home
 Waiting for the bell to go. (To go where?)
 Why are they all so big, other children?
 So noisy? So much at home they
 must have been born in uniform.”
 - *First Day at School* (Roger McGough)

USE: Here, Roger McGough wants to give us an impression of how far away home seems to a very small boy on his first ever day at school. See §19. VOICE.

★ §11. **ONOMATOPOEIA** 擬聲法: Words for sounds, e.g. ‘bang’, ‘clap’, ‘ping’, ‘pop’, ‘tap’.

EXAMPLE: “The **slap** and **plop** were obscene threats”
 - *Death of a Naturalist* (Seamus Heaney)

USE: Heaney wants us to hear the actual sounds that frogs make when jumping into a pond.

★ §12. **PERSONIFICATION** 擬人法: Giving a character or a human voice to something non-human, perhaps not even *alive*.

EXAMPLE: “**I am first and last to be felt of the living.**
I am Hunger.”
 - *Hunger* (Laurence Binyon)

USE: Binyon is showing us something we have all felt personally, feeling hungry, and seen on TV (famine 饑荒 and starvation) to make us see something familiar in a new and surprising way, and therefore understand its importance better. This poem tells us what ‘Hunger’ might say, if it could talk to us directly.

§13. **PUN** 雙關語: A double-meaning, e.g. “(to) fall” = (1) ‘to die in battle’ as well as (2) ‘to topple over’.

EXAMPLE: “**Waiting for the bell to go. (To go where?)**”
 - *First Day at School* (Roger McGough)

USE: McGough wants to show a small boy’s misunderstanding of how the verb ‘go’ is used in different contexts, showing his naivety.

§14. **REPETITION** 重複

EXAMPLE: “The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
 But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.”
 - *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* (Robert Frost)

USE: Frost repeats the last line of the poem to emphasize how sad he is that he must keep going on his journey, and not stop to watch how lovely falling snow is making the Massachusetts countryside.

★ §15. **RHYTHM (or METRE)** 節拍: The pace of a poem (slow or fast) or the number of **SYLLABLES** 音節 (or ‘**FEET**’) on each line.

EXAMPLE: “**Half a league, half a league,**
Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.”
 - *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (Alfred Tennyson)

USE: Here, the rhythm of the first two lines especially ought to evoke the sound of galloping horses in Lord Tennyson's description of a famous British cavalry charge which went horribly wrong.

- ★ **§16. RHYME 押韻:** When the last sounds of two adjacent lines end with the same sound. When two lines rhyme at the end of an otherwise unrhymed poem, this is called a **RHYMING COUPLET** and often shows finality.

EXAMPLE: "Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,
He lay in the four foot box as in his cot.
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four foot box, a foot for every year."

- *Mid-Term Break* (Seamus Heaney)

USE: Heaney uses a rhyming couplet (using rhyme for the first time in the poem) to express his final, sad acceptance of the fact that his little brother has been killed in a traffic accident.

- ★ **§17. SIMILE 明喻:** Another way of comparing two things (similar to **METAPHOR §8**) by saying that *A is like B*, or *A is as lovely as B*.

EXAMPLE: "Clownlike, happiest on your hands,
Feet to the stars, and moon-skulled,
Gilled like a fish. A common-sense
Thumbs-down on the dodo's mode.
Wrapped up in yourself like a spool,
Trawling your dark, as owls do.
Mute as a turnip from the Fourth
Of July to All Fools' Day,
O high-riser, my little loaf"

- *You're* (Sylvia Plath)

USE: Sylvia Plath uses a series of imaginative comparisons to show us how she imagines the unborn baby in her womb. Compare to **§7 METAPHOR**.

§18 SYNECDOCHE: There are several different forms of synecdoche examples including:

(1) A synecdoche may use *part of something to represent the entire whole*.

- The word "bread" can be used to represent "food" in general or "money" (e.g. "He is the breadwinner"; "Music is my bread and butter").
- The word "sails" is often used to refer to a whole ship.
- The phrase "hired hands" can be used to refer to "employees".
- The word "wheels" refers to a "Vehicle".

(2) *Whole to represent a Part*

- At the Olympics, you will hear that "China won a gold medal" in an event. That actually means "a team from China won a gold medal."
- If "the world" is not treating you well, that would not be the entire world but just a part of it that you've encountered.

(3) A *class* as representing the *whole*

A large group or class is sometimes used to represent a portion of it.

- One example of this is referring to the United States as "America" when "the Americas" [亞美利加洲] is actually made up of many countries.
- "Milk" is commonly used to refer to cow's milk when, in reality there are many sources of milk, e.g. "goat's milk", "soya milk", etc.

(4) A *specific part* representing a *whole*

Sometimes a specific thing is used to denote an entire class or group of things.

People refer to "paper tissues" as "Kleenex" which is just one brand of tissue.

ong Kong people refer to “Subways” or “Metros” in other cities as “MTR” which be the name for the underground part of the Hong Kong M.T.R. network (“~~The M.T.R. is very old and dirty.~~”)

(5) *Material* representing an *Object*

The material used to make something, or that was used in the past, is often used to represent the entire object.

- “Silverware” or “dishes” made of silver may be called “silver” even if they aren't solid silver.
- The word “plastic” is commonly used to refer to “credit cards”.

★ §19. **STANZA:** These are the poetry equivalents of paragraphs in prose.

- 1 - line stanza = monostich
- 2 - line stanza = couplet
- 3 - line stanza = tercet
- 4 - line stanza = quatrain
- 5 - line stanza = cinquain / quintrain
- 6 - line stanza = sestet
- 7 - line stanza = septet
- 8 - line stanza = octave

Isometric stanza: have the same syllabic beats, or the same meter, in every line.

Heterometric stanza: a stanza in which every line is a different length.

Spenserian stanza: named after Edward Spenser's unique stanza structure in his poem *The Faerie Queene*. A Spenserian stanza has nine line, eight in iambic pentameter—ten syllables in a line with emphasis on the second beat of each syllable—and a final line in iambic hexameter—a twelve-syllable beat line.

Ballad stanza: often used in folk songs, a ballad stanza is a rhyming quatrain with four emphasized beats (eight syllables) in the first and third lines, and three emphasized beats (six syllables) in the second and fourth lines.

★ §20. **TONE** 腔調, 語氣: Is the poem you are reading angry? Joyful? loving? sarcastic? sorrowful? ...

EXAMPLE: *There's a stake in your fat black heart
And the villagers never liked you.
They are dancing and stamping on you.
They always knew it was you.
Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.*

- *Daddy* (Sylvia Plath)

USE: Obviously, Sylvia Plath is extremely angry!

★ §21. **VOICE** 語態: Who is the poet, or some speaker / character in the poem?

EXAMPLE: *I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.*

- *Blackberry Picking* (Seamus Heaney)

USE: The voice in this poem belongs to an adult narrator remembering a childhood experience. The highlighted words convey the feelings of the upset small boy that the narrator (the poet himself) used to be.

STEP #4: FINALLY, YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE YOUR OWN COMMENTARY / EVALUATION

Do you think the poet has expressed the message in an effective way?

Why (not)? What does the poem mean to people today, and specifically to you personally as a modern twenty-first century Chinese person?

TEST YOURSELF!

Read the following poem by the modern Irish poet, Seamus Heaney, and explain:

1. What is the 'story' behind this poem?
2. Who are the characters in it?
3. What is the poem's message?
4. What are the different techniques Seamus Heaney uses to convey his message?
5. Conclusion: how successful do you think the poem is at conveying that message?

BLACKBERRY PICKING

- SEAMUS HEANEY



Late August, given heavy rain and sun
 For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.
 At first, just one, a glossy purple clot
 4 Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.
 You ate the first one and its flesh was sweet
 Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it
 Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
 8 Picking. The red ones inked up and that hunger
 Sent us out with milk-cans, pea-tins, jam-pots
 Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots.
 Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills,
 12 We trekked and picked until the cans were full,
 Until the tinkling bottom had been covered
 With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned
 Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered
 16 With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.

We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.
 But when the bath was filled we found a fur,

GLOSSARY:

blackberry [N][C]: 黑莓
 (to) **ripen** [V]: 變成熟
clot [N][C]: 凝塊
knot [N][C]: 節疤
lust [N][C][U]: 性慾, 淫慾; 強烈的慾望; 貪慾
briar [N][C]: 荊棘
 (to) **bleach** [V]: 將...曬得褪色
 (to) **trek** [V]: 艱苦跋涉
blob [N][C]: 一滴
potato drill [N][C]: 馬鈴薯鑽
 (to) **pepper** [V]: 痛打; 嚴懲
Bluebeard [N][P]: 藍鬍子
byre [N][C]: 牛棚; 牛欄

- A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.
 20 The juice was stinking, too. Once off the bush,
 The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.
 I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
 That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
 24 Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

cache [N][C]: 貯藏所; 隱藏處

(to) ferment [V]: 使發酵

rot [N][U]: 腐爛

1. WHAT IS THE POEM'S NARRATIVE?

The poem describes an annual even in the Irish (and British) countryside – the ripening of wild blackberries [黑莓] which takes place in late August, at the very end of the summer holidays, and which the poet enjoyed when he was small, because the fruit are delicious. The fruit do not last long, as they are free: people pick them from the hedgerows [灌木樹籬] which run alongside country roads. Everyone in the countryside knows that picking the berries is a race, as if the Heaneys don't pick the berries, their neighbors will. (Think about what happens in HK when companies give out free samples of food ... everyone grabs as many as they can, whether they need – or even want – them or not!)

Every year, the poet and his family grab as many free berries as they can, but the berries always go off [變質]. (They must be eaten right away, as the only real way to keep them is to turn them into blackberry jam. They cannot even be frozen.) Every year, the Heaneys are greedy, and always make the same mistake of taking more than they need, just as many people in HK always overeat at Chinese New Year and must diet before they can go to the beach in the spring.

2. WHO ARE THE POEM'S CHARACTERS?

The poet and his family, who are compared to Bluebeard, the greedy man in the famous fairytale who married lots of different women, and killed them all!

3. WHAT ARE THE POEM'S MESSAGES?

MESSAGE #1: Greed is bad. The poet and his family take more berries than they actually need, or can use, and are 'punished' when the berries start to rot.

MESSAGE #2: Sometimes, looking forward to having something is more fun than actually having that something when it actually comes.

MESSAGE #3: People very often do not learn from their mistakes: they often believe – without any real reason for doing so – that 'Things will be different next time around', but in the end, they aren't.

4. HOW ARE THESE MESSAGES CONVEYED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING POETIC DEVICES?

- **SIMILE:** The new, unripe berries are 'hard as a knot' [硬結] [line 4] indicating just how premature it would be to eat the fruit. Similarly, the Heaneys' hands are 'as sticky as Bluebeard's' [line 16] showing how their hands are as wet with the berries' juice as Bluebeard's hands were moist with his wives' blood. Another connection between Bluebeard's hands and those of the Heaneys' is that they are the same color, i.e. a reddish purple. Similarly, the picked berries are 'Like a plate of eyes' [line 15] which shows their size and (round) shape.
- **METAPHOR:** The metaphor 'Summer's blood was in it' [line 6] shows how much of summer's sunshine and warmth has gone into making the berries and their juice, which seems to encapsulate [壓縮] and condense the season.
- **ENJAMBMENT:** Heaney employs this technique to emphasize certain words and ideas, such as the slow passage of time, meaning the whole season of summer [line 1], as well as the swelling growth of the berries on the bush [line 3], the

'hunger' (i.e. greed) for the delicious fruit [*line 8*], and the (metaphorical) 'burning' of the berries, which seem to glow a dull red or purple color in the Heaneys' baskets. The 'burning' also links to the crazy, lustful, greedy glow in Bluebeard's eyes, revealing the way the greedy family 'lust' for the fruit.

- **ALLITERATION:** The alliterated sounds of 'wet grass **bleached** our **boots**' [*line 10*] ought to convey the swishing and thumping sounds the family make as they move through the long, wet grass, in order to get at the berries on the bushes. The **SIBILANT** [噝音] sounds also convey the swishing noise made by the Heaneys' boots.
- **ONOMATOPOEIA:** The berries make a 'tinkling' [*line 13*] sound as they are dropped into the Heaneys' empty containers.
- **DICTION:** The use of the verb 'peppered' [*line 15*] to show that the family's hands were covered in thorn pricks and scratches.
- **VOICE:** The voice in the second **STANZA** [*lines 22-24*] is that of the small boy whom the poet / narrator used to be, showing how upset and frustrated he used to get when all his lovely berries were spoiled by rot.
- **TONE:** The tone of the first **STANZA** [*lines 1 -16*] is celebratory [慶祝] showing the poet's excitement at the forthcoming treat [*lines 1 – 4*], the delicious juicy taste of the berries once they were picked [*lines 5 – 8*], and the feeling of family togetherness as the poet and his family trekked around the countryside, gathering their favorite fruit. However, the tone becomes at first angry and then disgusted, as the 'rat grey fungus' steals the family's treasured berries [*lines 18 - 21*], and finally sad, when the poet realizes he cannot stop the berries being wasted, and when he could not stop himself making the same mistake (i.e. taking more than he could keep), year after year. [*lines 22 – 24*]