



A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London

Lesson 5

Overview

- Examine form and poetic devices in the poem and how they are used to convey the poet's message.

Resources

- Word document: KS4 ARTM Learner Resource sheets
- PowerPoint presentation: KS4 ARTM L5 Presentation

Suggested procedure

1. Introduce the lesson's objective.
2. Introduce Task 1:

In pairs, examine the form/structure of the poem:

1. How many lines are there in each stanza? *Six – (stanzas with six lines are called sestets)*
 2. Can you split each stanza up into a smaller unit? *Yes, into three lines – tercets, so each sestet/six-line stanza has two tercets.*
 3. What is the rhyme scheme? *abc abc*
 4. How many syllables are there in each line? *The first and third lines of each tercet are long – they vary between 9-12 syllables. The second line is short – between 5- 7 syllables.*
3. After going over Task 1 as a class, introduce Task 2 (Think-Pair-Share activity), where learners are asked to consider the effect of the poem's form/structure. You may wish to listen again to Dylan Thomas reading the poem
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B2c4b23r3k>



DYLAN THOMAS

ROCK AND ROLL POET - KS4

- What is the effect of the poem's structure on the mood of the poem?

Possible answers: long and short lines create a serious/sombre/solemn mood which complements the poem's content. Some critics have suggested that the form imitates "the sea tumbling in harness", "the unmourning water" and "the

riding Thames" with the long lines forming the crest of a wave and the shorter lines its trough. The crest of the wave may be further interpreted to represent life, and the trough represents death, therefore the form (long line – life; – short line – death; long line – life) could be a symbol of the cycle of life and death.

4. Introduce Task 3, which serves to remind learners of different poetic devices. The answer is on Slide 5.
5. Using Task 4, learners can find extra examples of the poetic devices and consider their effect in the poem.