

# Year 7 Un-seen Poetry Revision Guide

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## GLOSSARY OF POETIC TERMS

### **Alliteration**

The repetition of the same consonant sounds at any place, but often at the beginning of words. Some famous examples of alliteration are tongue twisters.

*She sells seashells by the seashore, Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.*

### **Assonance**

The repetition or a pattern of (the same) vowel sounds, as in the tongue twister:

*"Moses supposes his toeses are roses."*

### **Couplet**

In a poem, a pair of lines that are the same length and (usually) rhyme and form a complete thought. Shakespearean sonnets usually end in a couplet.

### **Enjambment**

A line ending in which the sentence continues, with no punctuation, into the following line or stanza.

*"But in contentment I still feel  
The need of some imperishable bliss."*

### **Hyperbole**

A figure of speech in which deliberate exaggeration is used for emphasis. Many everyday expressions are examples of hyperbole:

*tons of money, waiting for ages, a flood of tears, etc.*

### **Imagery**

The use of pictures, figures of speech and description to evoke ideas feelings, objects actions, states of mind etc.

### **Litotes**

A figure of speech in which a positive is stated by negating its opposite. Some examples of litotes:

*no small victory, not a bad idea, not unhappy.*

### **Lyric**

A poem, such as a sonnet or an ode that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. A lyric poem may resemble a song in form or style.

### **Metaphor**

A figure of speech in which two things are compared, usually by saying one thing is another, or by substituting a more descriptive word for the more common or usual word that would be expected. Some examples of metaphors:

*the world's a stage, he was a lion in battle, drowning in debt, and a sea of troubles.*

It is probably the most important figure of speech to comment on in an essay.

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## **Onomatopoeia**

A figure of speech in which words are used to imitate sounds. Examples of onomatopoeic words are:

*buzz, hiss, zing, clippety-clop, cock-a-doodle-do, pop, splat, thump, tick-tock.*

Another example of onomatopoeia is found in this line from Tennyson's *Come Down, O Maid*:

*"The moan of doves in immemorial elms,/And murmuring of innumerable bees"*

The repeated "m/n" sounds reinforce the idea of "murmuring" by imitating the hum of insects on a warm summer day

## **Pastoral**

A poem that pictures country life in a peaceful, idealized way.

## **Personification**

A figure of speech in which nonhuman things or abstract ideas are given human attributes:

*the sky is crying, dead leaves danced in the wind, blind justice.*

## **Refrain**

A phrase, line, or group of lines that is repeated throughout a poem, usually after every stanza.

## **Rhyme**

The occurrence of the same or similar sounds at the end of two or more words.

The pattern of rhyme in a stanza or poem is shown usually by using a different letter for each final sound. In a poem with an *aabba* rhyme scheme, the first, second, and fifth lines end in one sound, and the third and fourth lines end in another. This pattern is known as a

## **Rhyme scheme**

## **Simile**

A figure of speech in which two things are compared using the word "like" or "as." An example of a simile using *like* occurs in Langston Hughes's poem 'Harlem':

*"What happens to a dream deferred?/ Does it dry up/ like a raisin in the sun?"*

## **Stanza**

Two or more lines of poetry that together form one of the divisions of a poem. The stanzas of a poem are usually of the same length and follow the same pattern of meter and rhyme.

## **Stress**

The prominence or emphasis given to particular syllables. Stressed syllables usually stand out because they have long, rather than short, vowels, or because they have a different pitch or are louder than other syllables.

## **Symbol**

When a word, phrase or image 'stands for' an idea or theme.

*The sun could symbolize life and energy or a red rose could symbolize romantic love.*

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Your culture is the way you live your life. It is about the country you live in, the clothes you wear, your language or style of speech, the sort of food you eat, how you celebrate important occasions, and the things you believe in and value. Think about your own way of life and try to give examples of these aspects of your culture. You may write or draw your ideas.

<b>Where I live</b>	<b>My language/ style of speech</b>
<b>The food I eat</b>	<b>Celebrations</b>
<b>The clothes I wear</b>	<b>Things I value</b>

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Can you think of any ways your culture is different to that of one other person? Make a list

### Themes that can help you make links between the poems

Ideas about language power and dialect

Feelings about being caught between two cultures

Feelings about change or how things do not change

Ideas about language and identity

Differences between attitudes and values

Beliefs and rituals

Customs and traditions

Protest against ideas and attitudes (including racism)

Feelings about independence

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## Half-Caste

Excuse me  
standing on one leg  
I'm half-caste

This sounds apologetic. Why has Agard done this?

5 Explain yusef  
wha yu mean  
when yu say half-caste  
yu mean when picasso  
mix red an green  
is a half-caste canvas/  
10 explain yusef  
wha yu mean  
when yu say half-caste  
yu mean when light an shadow  
mix in de sky  
15 is a half-caste weather/  
well in dat case  
england weather  
nearly always half-caste  
in fact some o dem cloud  
20 half-caste till dem overcast  
so spiteful dem dont want de sun pass  
ah rass/

Repetition

Why has Agard used a / in stead of a ?

25 explain yusef  
wha yu mean  
when yu say half-caste  
yu mean tchaikovsky  
sit down at dah piano  
an mix a black key  
wid a white key  
30 is a half-caste symphony/

Questioning. Is Agard asking us, the reader or someone else?

35 Explain yusef  
wha yu mean  
Ah listening to yu wid de keen  
half of mih ear  
Ah lookin at yu wid de keen  
half of mih eye  
and when I'm introduced to yu

I'm sure you'll understand  
why I offer yu half-a-hand  
40 an when I sleep at night  
I close half-a-eye  
consequently when I dream  
I dream half-a-dream  
an when moon begin to glow  
45 I half-caste human being  
cast half-a-shadow  
but yu must come back tomorrow  
wid de whole of yu eye  
an de whole of yu ear  
50 an de whole of yu mind

What effect does this description have?

What is Agard suggesting about the listener?

an I will tell yu  
de other half  
of my story

*John Agard*

There is a lack of punctuation in the poem.

Agard has written in his own accent. How does that affect the reading of the poem?

Agard is clearly angry about being called "half-caste". What words suggest he is angry?

Why do you think Leonard doesn't use capital letters?

from

## Unrelated Incidents

This poem is written in a Scottish

this is thi  
six a clock  
news thi  
man said n  
5 thi reason  
a talk wia  
BBC accent  
iz coz'yi  
widny wahnt  
10 mi ti talk  
about thi  
trooth wia  
voice lik  
wanna yoo  
15 scruff. if  
a toktabout  
thi trooth  
lik wanna yoo  
scruff yi  
20 widny think  
it wuz troo.  
jist wanna yoo  
scruff tokn.  
thirza right  
25 way ti spell  
ana right way  
ti tok it. this  
is me tokn yir  
right way a  
30 spellin. this  
is ma trooth  
yooz doant no  
thi trooth  
yirsellz cawz  
35 yi canny talk  
right. this is  
the six a clock  
nyooz. belt up.

A "BBC accent" is received pronunciation - no accent. BBC news readers used to speak without accents.

What affect does the phonetic spelling have on you?

Does accent really affect if you believe

Who can't talk right? Those without an accent? Or those with?

Why end with "belt up"? What affect will it have on the

Tom Leonard

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## Love After Love

This is impossible.  
So what could it  
.....?

The time will come  
when, with elation  
you will greet yourself arriving  
at your own door, in your own mirror  
and each will smile at the other's welcome,

The tone in  
the first  
verse seems  
joyful

Christian  
Imagery.

And say, sit here. Eat.  
You will love again the stranger who was your self.  
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart  
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you

What  
could this  
.....?

All your life, whom you ignored  
for another, who knows you by heart.  
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

This may mean the  
narrator is entering a  
new life. Or can you  
see other meanings?

The photographs, the desperate notes,  
peel your own image from the mirror.  
Sit. Feast on your life.

The poem uses  
a darker tone.  
Why?

■ DEREK WALCOTT

This poem has several possible meanings:

-  Self-discovery.
-  Human relationships.
-  Religion.

*Using different colours identify all the aspects of the poem that suggests each possible meaning.*

Nobody can say exactly what this poems means, so you will gain marks if you show that there is more than one possible interpretation.

**Not my business**

Who are 'they'?

How does this image make you feel?

They picked Akanni up one morning  
Beat him soft like clay  
And stuffed him down the belly of a waiting jeep

Was this planned?

~~What business of mine is it~~  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?

What does this represent?

Does this sound more or less threatening than the first verse?

They came one night  
Booted the whole house awake  
And dragged Danladi out,  
Then off to a lengthy absence  
What business of mine is it  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?

What does this show?

Why is it 'neat'?

Chinwe went to work one day  
Only to find her job was gone:  
No query, no warning, no probe-  
Just one neat sack for a stainless record.

Think about the country in which this poem is set. Why is this an effective image?

What business of mine is it  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?

And then one evening  
As I sat down to eat my yam  
A knock on the door froze my hungry hand.  
The jeep was waiting on my bewildered lawn  
Waiting, waiting in its usual silence.

Is this image effective?

Why repeat this word?

**Niyi Osundare**

Why does the poem not end with a definite outcome?

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‘**Not My Business**’ is most likely set in Nigeria, Niyi Osundare's country of birth.

He used this poem and others to object to the cruel dictatorship that ruled his country under General Abacha from 1993 to 1998. During Abacha's rule, writing poetry was considered a dangerous activity. Osundare regularly wrote poems for a Nigerian national newspaper which commented on the lives of people in that country. As a result, he was frequently called to account by security agents and quizzed about what his poems meant and to whom they referred. Osundare himself says, "with the kind of poetry I write, I can never be the dictator's friend. So I get a knock on the door at two in the morning a couple of times."

The poem criticises people who allow injustices to go on as long as it does not directly affect them. He suggests that if no one stands up against dictatorship, cruelty, poverty and injustice, it will, eventually, affect their lives.

The poem is a very good example of the narrator's voice being different from that of the poet. Even if we didn't know of Niyi Osundare's political beliefs, we naturally disagree with what the narrator says.

-  Underline all the words in the poem that suggest anger and hate.
-  What is your favourite image in the poem? Write a short summary of why you like this image.

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-  How do you feel about the narrator in this poem?

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