

A Level English Literature: Gatsby and Love Poetry through the Ages – Knowledge Organiser

The fourteen love poems are assessed at the end of Paper One in a comparison question with *The Great Gatsby*. As with the whole of Paper One, the exam question will be about love. You must include at least two poems in your answer.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Infidelity</u></p> <p><i>Several affairs in the novel; male unreliability, female vulnerability, breakdown of genuine connection, Modernist views of relationships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absent from thee • Scrutiny • Non Sum 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Unattainable love/barriers to love</u></p> <p><i>Range of barriers to love in the novel, such as class, wealth and status. Inevitability of Gatsby's failure to achieve Daisy and Myrtle achieving Tom due to their class/roots.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Garden of Love • Ae Fond Kiss • Absent from thee 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Class and Love</u></p> <p><i>Fitzgerald's criticism of 1920s society, wealthy upper class excessive lifestyles, false optimism of the American Dream. Working class/self-made dreams fail, only the wealthy prosper</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whoso • Ruined Maid • At an Inn
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lust/sex/seduction</u></p> <p><i>Desire exists for wealthy white men only, women/lower class men cannot access it or achieve their desires</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flea • To His Coy Mistress 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Love and time/enduring love</u></p> <p><i>Gatsby's love for Daisy becomes an obsession over time with idea of her/her wealth/what she signifies. Past affects the characters – they cannot turn back time but nor can they fully sever themselves from their past.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonnet 116 • Remember 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Love and isolation</u></p> <p><i>Love is isolating, creates loneliness rather than connection. Characters' romantic relationships are isolating (arguably platonic love, Nick and Gatsby, is the exception).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non Sum • Whoso
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Destructive/painful love</u></p> <p><i>Violent deaths of Gatsby, Myrtle and George suggest that romantic love inevitably ends in destruction.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whoso • Ae Fond Kiss • La Belle Dame 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Idealised love</u></p> <p><i>Gatsby idealises Daisy; she is a symbol of wealth/status. Fitzgerald's criticism of the lack of genuine connection in the 1920s.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She Walks in Beauty • Sonnet 116 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Love and gender</u></p> <p><i>Daisy – vacuous, Jordan – dishonest, Myrtle – promiscuous. The women in the text are never portrayed positively. Myrtle's death as a result of the patriarchal structures oppressing her.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She Walks in Beauty • La Belle Dame • The Ruined Maid

<p>Who so list to hount I knowe where is an hynde 'may spend his tyme in vain' 'high in a white palace, the king's daughter, the golden girl' (p115)</p> <p>'graven with Diamondes' 'he gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred dollars' (p74)</p>	<p>Sonnet 116 'it is the star to every wandering barke' 'I ... distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away' (p24)</p> <p>'Lov's not Time's fool' 'Can't repeat the past? Why, of course you can' (p106)</p>	<p>The Flea 'swells with one blood made of two' 'swollen...along its monstrous length' (p63)</p> <p>'we almost, yea more than married are' 'forever wed his unattainable visions to her perishable breath' (p106)</p>
<p>To His Coy Mistress 'at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near' 'rested against the face of a defunct mantelpiece clock' (p84)</p> <p>'though we cannot make our sun stand still, yet we will make him run' 'I'm going to fix everything the way it was before' (p106)</p>	<p>The Scrutiny 'sound for treasure' 'gleaming like silver'(p142)</p> <p>'like skilful mineralists' 'lived like a young rajah, collecting jewels, chiefly rubies' (p64)</p>	<p>Absent from thee 'the straying Fool' 'once in a while I go off on a spree and make a fool of myself' (p125)</p> <p>'Absent from thee I languish still' 'he had thrown himself into it with a creative passion, adding to it all the time, decking it out with every bright feather that drifted his way' (p92)</p>
<p>The Garden of Love 'it was filled with graves and tomb-stones where flowers should be' 'ash-grey men, who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air' (p26)</p> <p>'where I used to play on the green' 'a fresh, green breast of the new world' (p171)</p>	<p>Ae fond kiss 'star of hope she leaves him' 'you always have a green light that burns all night at the end of your dock' (p90)</p> <p>'nae cheerful twinkle lights me' his count of enchanted objects had diminished by one' (p90)</p>	<p>She Walks in Beauty 'thoughts serenely sweet express how pure, how dear their dwelling-place' 'that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool' (p22)</p> <p>'all that's best of dark and bright meet in her aspect and her eyes' 'as cool as their white dresses and their impersonal eyes in the absence of all desire' (p17)</p>
<p>Remember 'Gone far away into the silent land' 'her life violently extinguished, knelt in the road and mingled her thick blood with the dust' (p131)</p> <p>'When you can no more hold me by the hand' 'I want to wait here till Daisy goes to bed' (p139)</p>	<p>The Ruined Maid 'tired of digging potatoes and spudding up docks' 'a universe of ineffable gaudiness spun itself out in his brain' (p95)</p> <p>'now you've gay bracelets and bright feathers three' white flannel suit, silver shirt, and gold tie' (p81)</p>	<p>At an Inn 'severing sea and land' 'he stretched out his arms towards the dark water' (p25)</p> <p>'palsied unto death the pane-fly's tune' 'we drove on toward death in the cooling twilight' (p129)</p>
<p>La Belle Dame 'sing a faery's song' 'that voice was a deathless song' (p93)</p> <p>'so haggard and so woe-begone' 'he was one of these worn-out men' (p130)</p>	<p>Non Sum 'I was desolate and sick of an old passion' 'he was running down like an overwound clock' (p89)</p> <p>'when the feast is finished and the lamps expire there falls thy shadow' 'he broke off and began to walk up and down a desolate path of fruit rinds and discarded favours and crushed flowers' (p105)</p>	

Critical views

Feminist: 'Daisy in fact is more victim than victimizer; she is victim first of Tom's 'cruel' power, but then of Gatsby's increasingly depersonalised vision of her'

Leland S Person

'Her left breast was swinging loose like a flap, and there was no need to listen for the heart beneath'

Marxist: 'The characters' ...closest relationships are not with each other...but with published, advertised and perceived images and print.'

Ronald Berman

'It was full of money – that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the cymbals' song of it... high in the white palace, the king's daughter, the golden girl'

Psychoanalytic: '[A psychoanalytical approach explains] the odd vacuum placed just at the point where Gatsby finally reaches and possesses the unreachable woman'

A.B Paulson

'A universe of ineffable gaudiness spun itself out in his brain while the clock ticked on the wash-stand and the moon soaked with the wet light his tangled clothes upon the floor.'

New Historicist: Tyson writes that The Great Gatsby reveals one of the central contradictions in the American ideal of the self-made man:

'although [it] claims to open... history to all of those [with] the ambition and perseverance to 'make their mark' ...[it] is permeated by the desire to escape history'

Lois Tyson

'gradually I became aware of the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors' eyes—a fresh, green breast of the new world'

Writer's methods (The Great Gatsby)

Characterisation, Narrative style, Allusion, Intertextuality, Symbolism: Green light, Light and dark, time, eyes/sight/seeing, colour, excess (shirts, food) cars, natural imagery, urban spaces, breasts, Motif (appearance vs reality, dreams, obsession)
Setting (NY, Valley of Ashes, East/West Egg, houses/apartments/hotels)
Structure (Nick's narrative, frame narrative, unreliable), foreshadowing, cinematic cuts

Essay structure

- Thesis: Overview statement addressing the focus of the question, referencing both poems. Comment on relevant contextual/historical factors. Comment on typicality.
- Main body (2 – 3 connections, connecting quotes, writer's methods)
- Conclusion: Link back to thesis

Section C: Comparing Texts

Here is a selection of possible questions. Use these to help structure your revision – you could make notes, plan an answer, or write an answer in timed conditions. You would have an hour to complete this section of the exam.

You must write about two texts: one prose text and one poetry text (at least two poems must be covered). One of these texts must be written pre-1900.

- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about passion
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about barriers to love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and loss
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about erotic desire
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about power dynamics in relationships
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about women's roles in relationships
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and time
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and distance
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and death
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the futility of love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and class
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about marriage
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about appearance and reality
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about fidelity
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about attitudes to sexuality
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about dreams
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about unrequited love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about obsession
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about devotion
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the permanence of love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and isolation
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about love and innocence
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the effects of being rejected by a lover
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the etiquette of love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the destructive power of love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about the redemptive power of love
- Compare how the authors of two texts you have studied present ideas about young love
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that writers are more interested in presenting an idealised view of love than a realistic one
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that writers present all love affairs as doomed to fail
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that only true love can make people happy
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that women hold the power in love and relationships
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that physical attraction is not a strong basis for a lasting relationship
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that society prevents love between members of different social classes
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that male power is the defining aspect of relationships
- With reference to two texts you have studied, examine the view that love is pure and incorruptible