

Structure - The Blueprint of Poetry ½

At face value, a poem is perceived as a terse, compact, emotional expression of a writer that may be seen through the lens of the individual's (the writer's) lifestory or through the lens of another individual's lifestory. Akin to when a house is built, an architect designs and sketches the intricate plans for the house; while the contractor and his/her team construct the building according to scale and design. I dare say that the process is executed with much precision. Integral to the process is the ability of a skilled eye to interpret the blueprint and reproduce the intended design.

A similar approach needs to be adopted when studying the 20 poem on the 2012 - 2014 CSEC Syllabus. Poets may share similar themes or issues but they may vary when they layout their ideas, their choice of tone or the angle from which the poem is written. Other variations may be associated with the poet's choice of language or the imagery involved. These nuances and variations are informed by the social and economic situations that have coloured the personal experiences of the individual writers. As one reads a poem, one may question what the poem is about, and how it may compare or contrast with other poems. A reader's ability to accurately interpret a literary work would also be influenced by the reader's social and economical background.

Critics generally interpret or attach meaning to a poem by examining its:

- Title
- Form - stanzaic or free verse
- Rhyme Scheme
- Themes
- Imagery - based on the choice of language
- Writer's Technique (point of view/perspective, tone, attitude, literary devices)
- Symbolism
- Irony

This careful analysis helps the reader to identify the '**known**' and the meaning and intention that sometimes form the '**unknown**'. Similar to drama, poetry addresses a number of issues that affect everyday life, and as such, a number of real life issues are thematically discussed and presented. In the final analysis, how a reader relates to the poet's thoughts would be directly related to his or her personal experiences. The poet's ability to appease the reader in as many of the listed areas above would determine the quality of the literary review.

This review can therefore be compared to a 'fine-teeth' combing process of the the literary work.