



- COURSE CODE: ENG 114
- COURSE TITLE: Introductory to Poetry
- NUMBER OF UNITS:3 Units
- COURSE DURATION: Three hours per week
- COURSE LECTURER: **Dr. Solomon Awuzie**

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- define poetry as a form of writing or literature
- discuss the elements of poetry that they have been taught in the course
- identify the different forms of poetry through their characteristic features
- comment on the qualities of any given poem to demonstrate the skills of criticism/appreciation they have acquired in this course.

Course Details

- Week 1: The Nature of Poetry as Literature: What is literature?
- Week 2: What is poetry?
- Week 3: Elements of poetry
- Week 4: Major form/types of poetry
- Week 5: Purpose of poetry as a form of literature
- Week 6: techniques and literary devices of poetry
- Week 7: Analysis of poetry: English poems
- Week 8: English poems /American poems
- Week 9: American poems
- Week 10: African poems

Week 11: African poems

Week 12: Revision

Week 13: Revision

Resources

Lecturer's Office Hours

Dr. Solomon Awuzie Thursdays 1.00 – 4.00 Pm

Course Lecture Notes: <https://>

Books

Egudu, R.N. *The Study of Poetry*. Ibadan: University Press Plc 2007

Senanu, KE and Vincent, T. *A Selection of African Poetry*. London: Longman Group Limited, 2000

Nwoga, Donatus. *West African Verse*. London: Longman, 19

Awuzie, Solomon. *A Psychoanalytic Reading of the Poetry of Okigbo and Ojaide*. Germany: Scholar's Press, 2016

Trilling, Lionel. *The Experience of Literature*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967.

Pooley, Robert, George K. Anderson, Paul Farmer and Helen Thornton. *England in Literature*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company 1963

Killam, Douglas and Alicia L Kerfoot. *Student Encyclopedia of African Literature*. London: Greenwood Press, 2008

Structure of the Programme/ Method of Grading

Grading method is organized into two basic parts namely:

Continuous assessment: 30%

End of Semester Examination: 70%

Assignments & Grading

- **Academic Honesty:** All classwork should be done independently, unless explicitly stated otherwise on the assignment handout.
- You may discuss general solution strategies, but must write up the solutions yourself.
- If you discuss any problem with anyone else, you must write their name at the top of your assignment, labeling them “collaborators”.
- **NO LATE HOMEWORKS WILL BE ACCEPTED**
- Turn in what you have at the time it is due.
- All homeworks are due at the start of class.
- If you will be away, turn in the homework early.

Preamble

The Nature of Poetry as Literature: What is literature?

- Imitates life
- Records man’s experience
- “News that remains news” (Ezra Pound)
- Marked by the qualities of imaginative, creative and suggestiveness
- These qualities are explicitly discernible in poetry

What is poetry?

- reflects individual’s perception of life experiences
- convey significant truths about the human condition
- employ language that is deliberately adorned by the use of figurative expressions

Definitions of Poetry

- Poetry is the language that tells us, through a more or less emotional reaction, something that cannot be said. All poetry, great or small, does this. - *Edwin Arlington Robinson*
- I would define poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of beauty. Its sole arbiter is taste. With the intellect or with the conscience it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with duty or with truth. – *Edgar Allan Poe*
- Poetry is the imaginative expression of strong feeling, usually rhythmical...the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquillity – *William Wordsworth*
- The proper and immediate object of Science is the acquirement or communication of truth; the proper and immediate object of Poetry is the communication of pleasure. - *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*
- Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds. – *Percy Bysshe Shelley*
- An actual poem is the succession of experiences – sounds, images, thoughts, emotions – through which we pass when we are reading as poetically as we can. - *Andrew Bradley*
- ...the rhythmic, inevitably narrative, movement from an overclothed blindness to a naked vision. – *Dylan Thomas*
- If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold that no fire can ever warm me, I know that it is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that it is poetry. – *Emily Dickinson*

Elements of poetry

Poetry is made of some major genres and they include the following:

- Imagery: poetry suggests its theme by means of pictures. Imagery is created in poetry through the use of the following: simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, sensory appeal etc

- Sound: poetry aspires to the condition of music. This is to say sound is an essential element of music. Sound is created in poetry through the use of the following: Onomatopoeia, Rhyme, Alliteration, consonance, Assonance, Repetition, Refrain etc.
- Rhythm: rhythm suggests the beat or pulse in poetry. It is concerned with the repetition or recurrence that makes rhythm a vital factor in the organisation of the musical beauty of poetry.
- Diction: this is the peculiar choice of words used by the poets.

Major forms/ types of poetry

Poetry is made up of major forms or types which include:

- The Epic: a long narrative poem- originally handed down in oral tradition, later a traditional literary form- dealing with national heroes, having a world-wide or cosmic setting, and written in a deliberately ceremonial style.
- The Ballad: a narrative song handed down in oral tradition. The traditional ballad stanza is a quatrain, alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and trimeter.
- The Ode: a long lyric poem formal in style and complex in form, often written for a special occasion.
- The Sonnet: a lyric poem with a traditional form of fourteen iambic pentameter lines
- The Elegy: a traditional poetic form that treats of death in a formal, philosophic way
- The Lyric: any short poem, or passage in a poem, intended mainly to express a state of mind.

The purpose of poetry as a form of literature

- For the creation of beauty:

- To communicate thoughts or ideas or the experiences which gave rise to them:
- For the expression of human Emotion:

Techniques and literary devices of poetry

Irony: this is one in which the author seems, superficially, to mask his real intention. In a more restricted sense irony refers to a statement that says the opposite of what is really implied. This is sometimes called verbal irony in order to distinguish it from irony of situation, dramatic irony, etc

Paradox: a statement that is self-contradictory on the surface, but which reveals a subtler meaning on reflection

Metaphor: a figure of speech involving an implied comparison

Simile: a figure of speech involving a comparison made explicit by the use of the word like or as

Personification: a figure of speech in which a thing or an abstraction is treated as a person.

Hyperbole: a figure of speech involving great exaggeration for expressive or comic effect.

Onomatopoeia: words used in such a way that the sound of the words imitates the sound of the thing spoken about.

Analysis of poetry

Analysis of English poems:

- William Shakespeare's "Sonnet 18"
- William Wordsworth's "Expostulation and Reply"
- Samuel Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"
- Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind"

- TS Eliot's "Journey of the Magi"
- John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

Analysis of American poems

- A.E. Housman's "Be Still, My Soul, Be Still"
- Edgar Allan Poe's "To Helen"
- Emily Dickinson's "A Clock Stopped"
- Ezra Pound's "Ite"

Analysis of African poems

- Leopold Sedar Senghor's "I will pronounce your name"
- Birago Diop's "Vanity"
- David Diop's "Africa"
- Dennis Brutus's "A troubadour I traverse"
- Oswald Mtshali's "Just a passerby"
- Kofi Awoonor's "The Cathedral"
- Wole Soyinka's "Telephone Conversation"
- Okot p' Bitek's "Cattle Egret"