

Learner Resource 3 Integrating literary and linguistic approaches

Divide into four groups. Each group has a selection of words taken from "Introduction" from *Songs of Innocence*.

Group One: Nouns

Valleys, songs (x3) glee, cloud, child (x2), song (x2), lamb, cheer, pipe (x2), joy, piper (x2), book, sight, reed pen, water.

1. First sort these nouns into abstract and concrete.
2. What links or patterns can you see?
3. Are there any words that appear to deviate from the pattern?
4. Can you construct a narrative from the words you have?

Group Two: Adjectives

Wild, pleasant, merry, happy (x3), hollow, rural, clear.

1. First sort these adjectives into those that have positive connotations and those that have negative connotations.
2. What links or patterns can you see?
3. Are there any words that appear to deviate from the pattern?
4. Can you construct a narrative from the words you have?

Group Three: Verbs

Piping (x2), saw, laughing, pipe, wept (x2), drop, sing, sung, sit, write, read, vanished, plucked, made, stained, wrote, hear.

1. First sort these verbs into stative and dynamic.
2. What links or patterns can you see?
3. Are there any words that appear to deviate from the pattern? Think about the tenses, for example.
4. Can you construct a narrative from the words you have?

Group Four: Syntax

Types: Simple sentences (x3), complex (x1), compound (x4). **Repetition:** "piping down..."; "piping songs..."; "so I piped..."; "so I piped..."; "so I sung..."; "so he vanished..."; "and I pluck'd..."; "and I made..."; "and I stain'd..."; "and I wrote".

1. Given the frequency of the sentence types listed above, and the repeated syntactical constructions, what sort of poem would you expect this to be? (e.g. lyrical, song-like, didactic, rhetorical etc.)
2. Can you construct a narrative from the words and phrases you have?

Feed back to the class. Discuss any differences in interpretations that you have found. Read "Introduction" from *Songs of Innocence*, and discuss how accurate your predictions were.

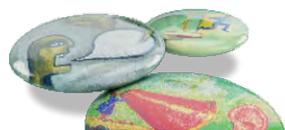
Writing an opening:

Each group take a copy of "Introduction" from *Songs of Innocence*, and write an introductory paragraph on the use of the particular word class or language level that you have had as your focus.

Those students studying the verbs:

You could start your paragraph with the statement:

"This poem is a simple narrative that charts the poet's apparent inspiration and motivation for the writing of *Songs of Innocence*. The use of the verbs within this poem is interesting because...". "One pattern that is clear is...".



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Those students studying the nouns:

You could start your paragraph with the statement:

"This poem sets the tone for Blake's *Songs of Innocence* as it not only celebrates the harmony of man, nature and God (in the reference to the lamb), but is also a celebration of creativity. This becomes evident when we study the nouns that clearly follow a pattern of..."

Those students studying the adjectives:

You could start your paragraph with the statement:

"The narrative of this poem plots a move from music, to song, to writing, but there is also a sense of loss in the child disappearing in verse four and the staining of the water in verse five. The choice of adjectives is interesting as it clearly shows..."

Those students studying the syntax:

You could start your paragraph with the statement:

"There is a simplicity and directness in the way in which the imperatives of the direct speech of the child are answered by the compliance of the narrator. He seems to be inspired by the child, and to adopt an almost child-like perspective. The syntax within this poem is interesting as the poet chooses to use..."

