

BM7, Wintersemester 2011/2012, ASSIGNMENT 1 – Analysing Poetry

Please make sure to submit your assignment stapled together but not bound in any folder. Every assignment must include a “title-page” and the statement on plagiarism.

Please address the following three tasks and questions. You may write up to three pages of text, according to the formatting specifications of our style sheet. In fairness to everybody else, any text beyond the first three pages will be ignored.

1. Communicative Situation, Theme and Figurative Speech

(a) Communicative Situation

What do you find out about the speaker, the addressee, the communicative situation?

(b) Theme

Identify the various sections of the poem. Comment on the theme and its development from one section to the next?

(c) Figurative Speech

Identify one metaphor from this poem and analyse it closely. Give examples of two other figures of speech from the poem.

2. Genre, Metre, Interplay and Rhyme Scheme

Comment on genre, metre, interplay and rhyme scheme.

3. Spot a problem

Briefly suggest a way to discuss this poem in connection with other poems you have read, and why such a comparison might be relevant. You may build on your response to one or several of the earlier questions.

Sonnet on the Death of Mr. Richard West

Thomas Gray

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And redd'ning Phoebus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire:
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require.
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

Explanations:

l.2 Phoebus Greek god, associated, among other things, with light and with the sun
l.9 race *here*: mankind