

Porphyria's Lover

Essay

10. Choose a poem which is written in a particular poetic form or which has a particularly effective structure.

Discuss how the poet's use of form or structure contributes to the impact of the poem's central concern(s).

Introduction

- Title
- author
- make it **very** clear which question you are answering
- Explain what a dramatic monologue is - and briefly explain how Porphyria's Lover fits in (and maybe doesn't)

Main Body One - Structure

- Introduce and Quote the first 5 lines.
- Explain the rhyme scheme.
 - *Why has Browning used this - how does it add to the effect of the dramatic monologue*
- Explain the rhythmic structure (define what iambic tetrameter is).
 - *Why has Browning used this (of all possible rhythms to use)?*
- Explain how and where it breaks the rhythmic structure.
 - *Why has Browning decided to break the rhythm here (what might he be emphasising)*

Main Body Two - First half of the poem

- Explain how the setting sets up the poem.
- Explain who the characters are and how we know this.
- Remember to link it to what the question asks.
- Try to name the techniques used in any quotes.
- Try to make sure there is a variety of these (don't just write about word choice - make sure you analyse something about sentence structure / personification / sound effects / etc)

Main Body Three - The Turning Point

- The turning point in the poem - when the Speaker has what he wants: ‘Porphyria worshipped me.’
- What does this reveal (or confirm) about his character?
- How is the murder made particularly shocking?

Main Body Four - After her Death

- What do we learn about the Speaker here?
- Remember a key feature of a Dramatic Monologue is that there should be a gap between what the Speaker thinks he is telling us - and what we are learning.
- Again remember not just to focus on word choice but make sure you include a range of techniques.

Final Section (this might be added to the end of Main Body Four)

- The two ambitious problems with the end of the poem.
 - *Remember to explain an ambiguity you need to suggest at least two possible interpretations of what it might mean.*
- What does the Speaker mean when he says “And yet God has not said a word!”?
- Who is the Speaker talking to?
- Why has Browning left this unclear - it’s not because he did not know how to write a Dramatic Monologue.

Conclusion

- Restate the title and the author and what the line of argument in the essay was.
- (If you have answered the question in throughout your essay / if you've done everything the 'task' part asked for then your conclusions should be very short).
- Other things you can mention in a conclusion:
- Evaluate with reference to other texts (quite difficult to do quickly).
- Relate the theme / key aspect of the question to something in the modern world. A "Although this is a Victorian poem it still speaks to us today ..." or "Porphyria's Lover still appeals to a modern reader because ..."
- This might get an extra mark or 2 but don't stress - it's very much a 'cherry on top' feature.