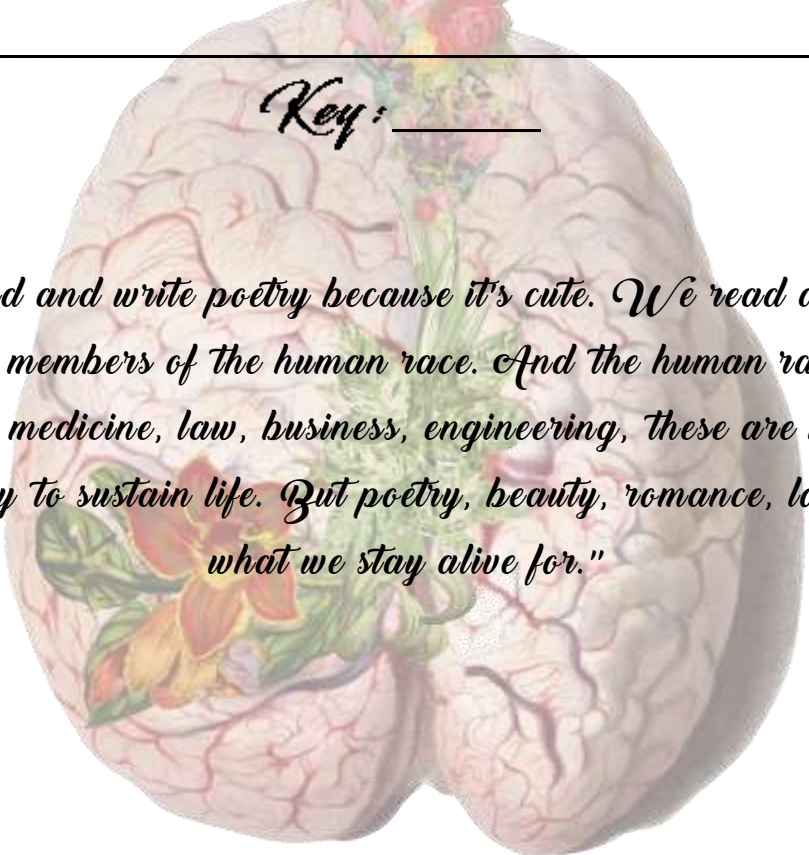




*English
Home language
Poetry
Gr 12*

Name Et Surname.

Key: _____



"We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for."

Prescribed Poems

FIRST TERM

REMEMBER – CHRISTINA ROSETTI

FIRST DAY AFTER THE WAR – MAZISI KUNENE

THE ZULU GIRL – ROY CAMPBELL

MOTHO KE MOTHO KA – JEREMY CRONIN

SECOND TERM

FUNERAL BLUES – WYSTAN HUGH AUDEN

A HARD FROST – CECIL DAY – LEWIS

AN AFRICA THUNDERSTORM – DAVID RUBADIRI

AN AFRICAN ELEGY – BEN OKRI

THIRD TERM

SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED – E. E. CUMMINGS

THE GARDEN OF LOVE – WILLIAM BLAKE

FELIX RANDAL – GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

VULTURES – CHINUA ACHEBE



GLOSSARY

Vestige — remnant

Theme:

Death, remembrance, relinquishment, forgiveness.

FORM

Petrarchan/Italian Sonnet (14 lines)
Rhyme Scheme: AB-BA / ABBA / CDD / ECE

Sound Devices

Long syllables force a slow, mournful reading of the sonnet.

Contrasted by the pace of L 9 & 13 which is more upbeat + positive.

'you' + 'our' - addressing a loved one—letter written after their death

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
Mournful then Cheerful

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
Sad then peaceful

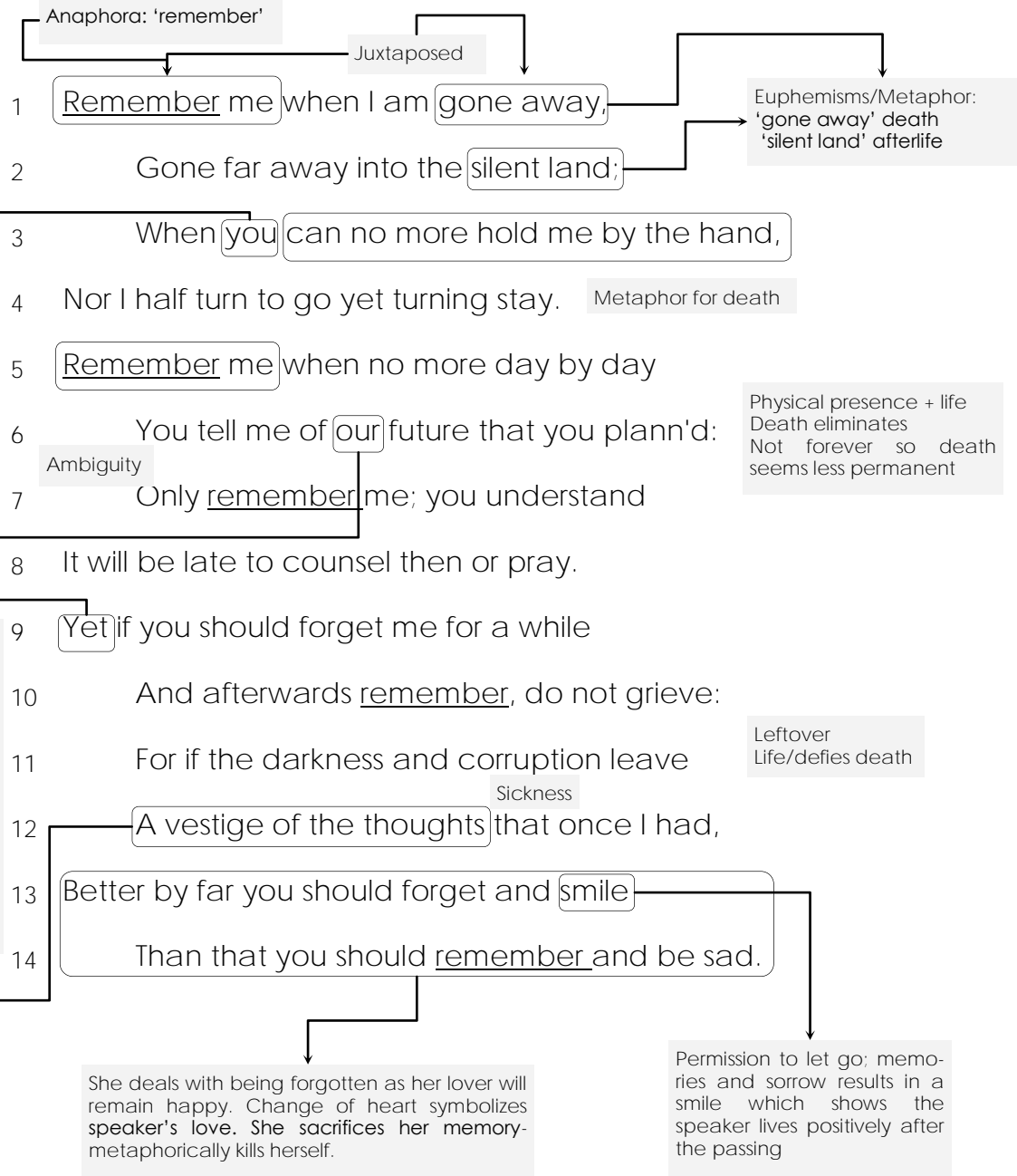
Remember

Christina Rosetti (1830–1894)

Victorian Poet

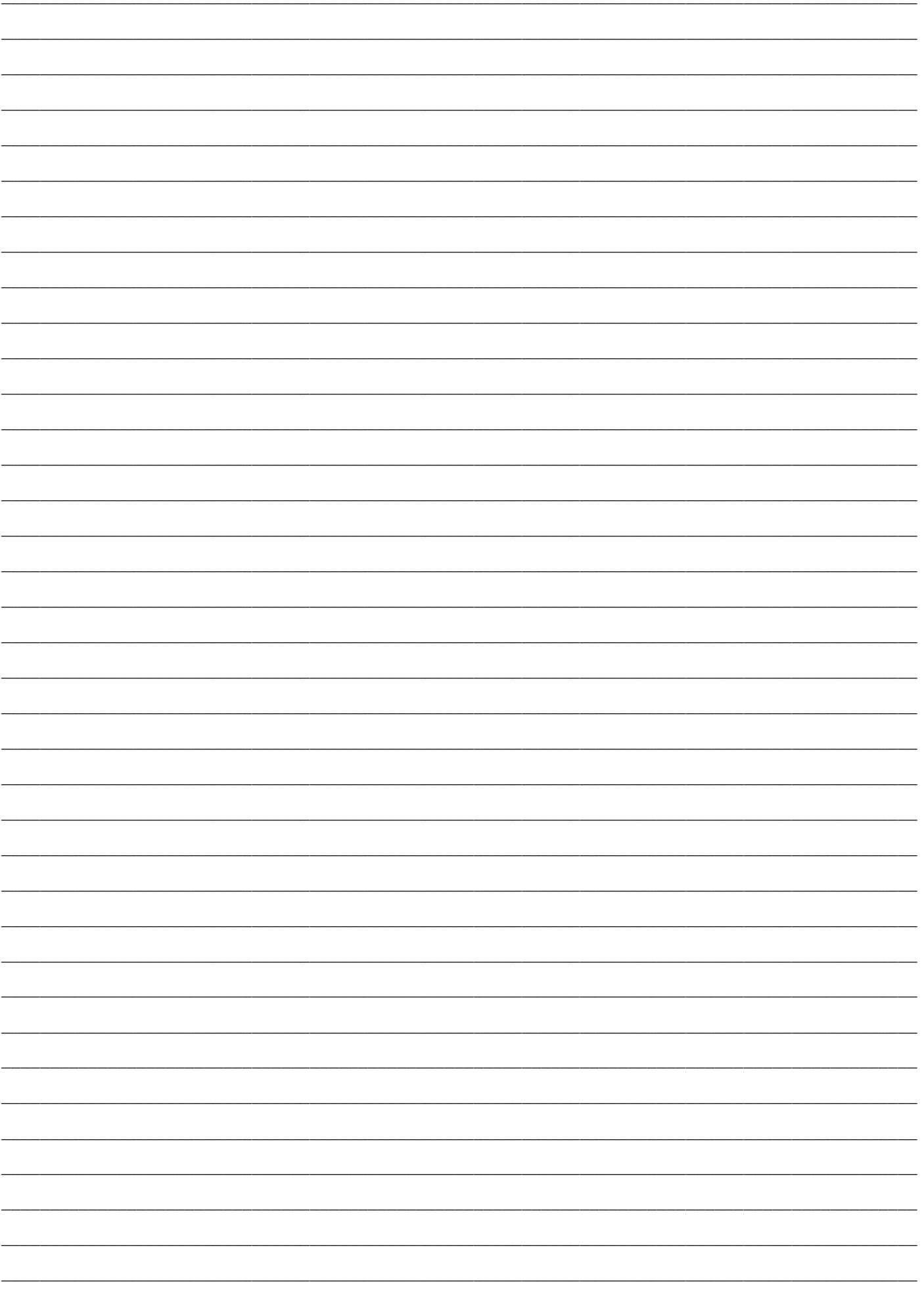
It's a command/order. Summarizes the poems major theme—remembrance. Woman is thinking about her death+ doesn't want her beloved to forget her. This poem starts off depressing with sad content but then becomes a poem that celebrates life. Remembrance—a way of keeping someone metaphorically alive.

Elegiac



Octave: Looks back and clings to memories (memories + remembering)

Sestet: seeks to find a way forward (forgetting + moving forward)



First Day After the War

Mzisi Kunene (1930–2006)

Political/Activist/Protest

Glossary
Coiling — form spirals
Ululating — wailing/howling

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
Energetic

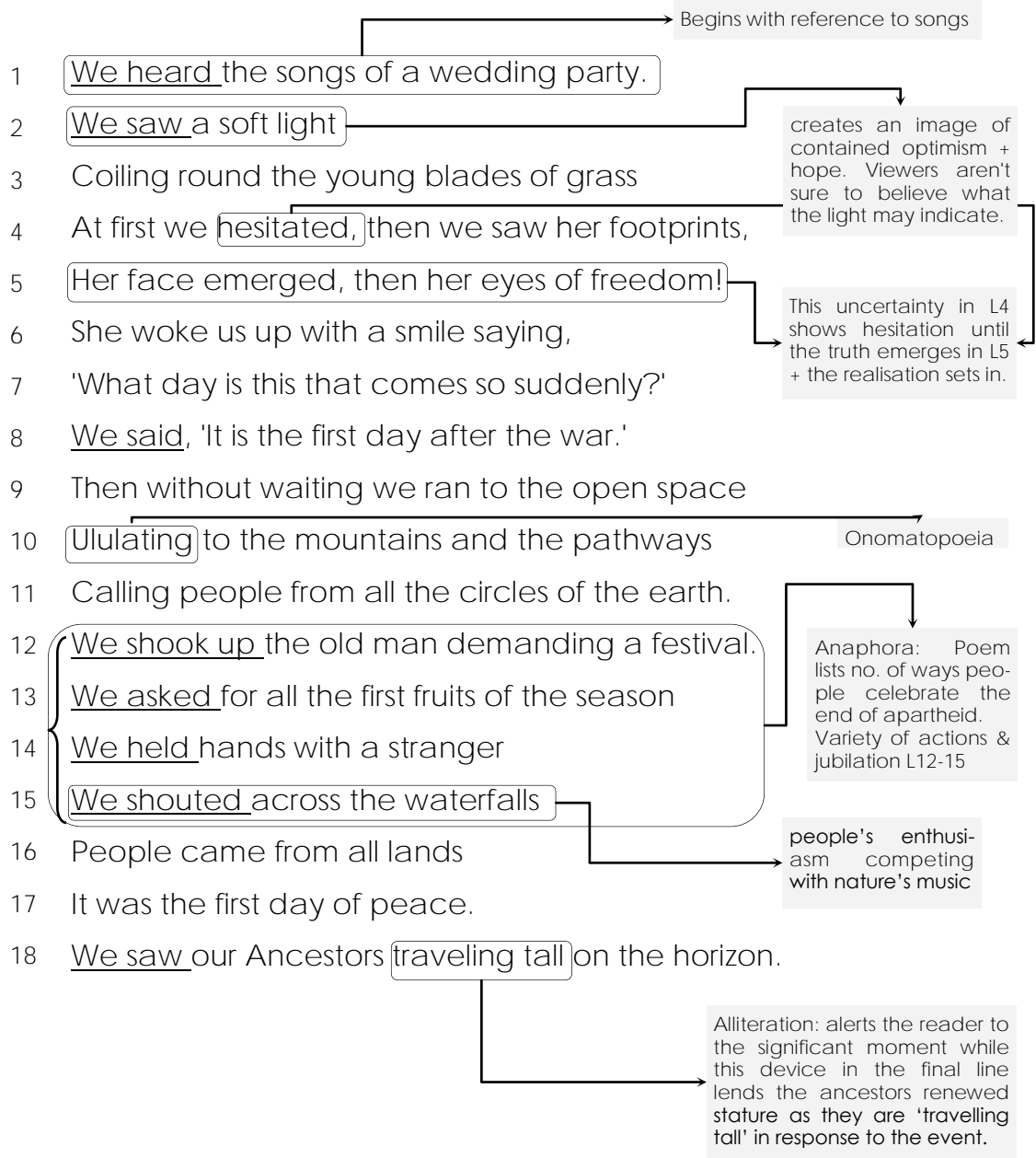
Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
Joyful

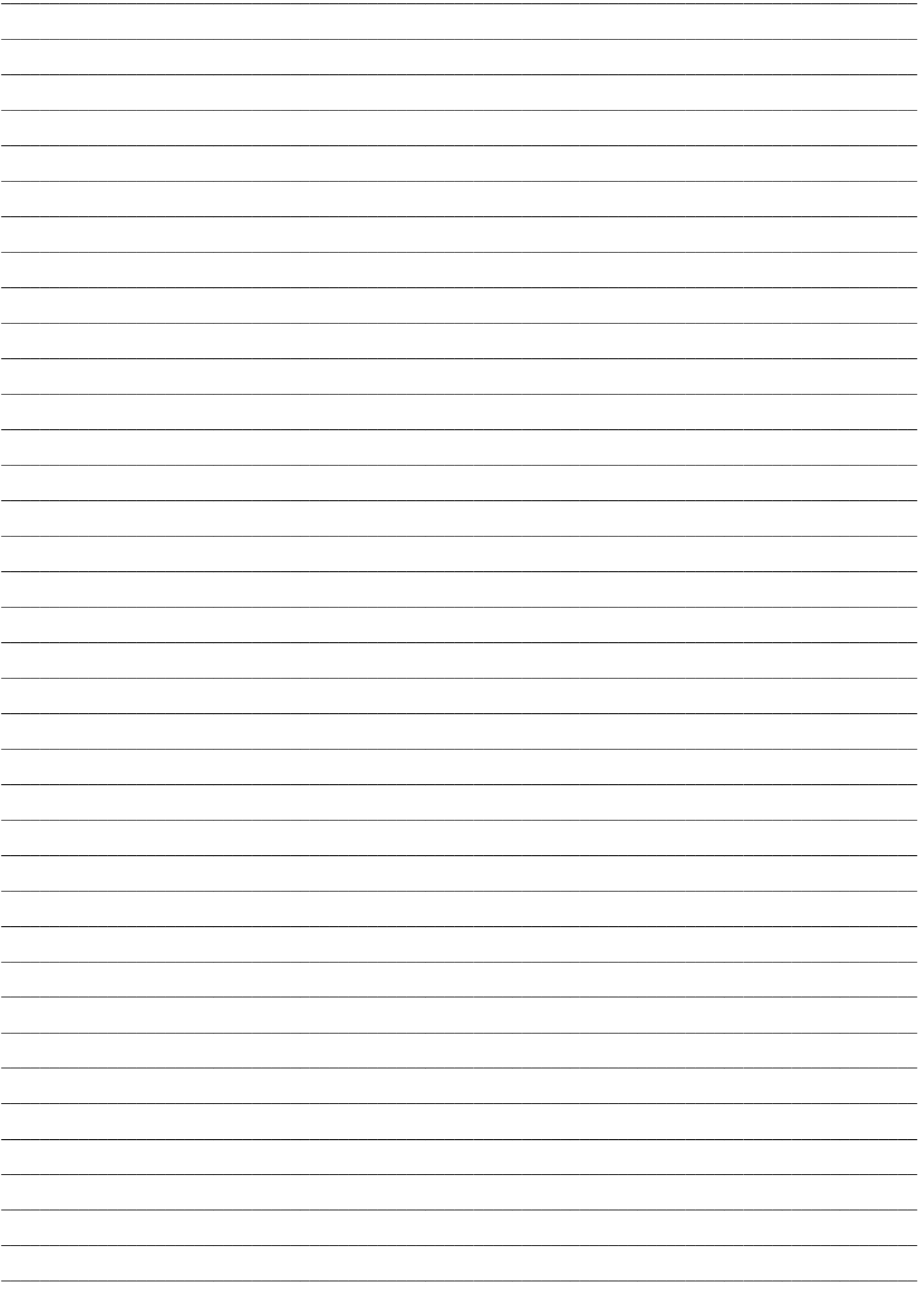
Theme:
Triumphs over oppression

Form:
Free verse
Repetitive form of the line structure (l12-15)
Implying the overwhelming joy prompted an unrestrained physical response and people responded impulsively

Poetic Devices
Simple/effective diction to capture the scene adds spontaneous nature of excitement displayed—actions speak for themselves

Mzisi Kunene wrote much of his poetry in South Africa, in the time of apartheid, a period in which black people were discriminated against and oppressed. His poem describes the joy that people felt at the ending of this system of government. The poem lists a number of ways in which the people celebrate the news. Notice the variety of the actions and the jubilation this shows. The news is so wonderful that we see how people of all types celebrate together.





GLOSSARY

Acres — remnant
Smoulder — burn slowly w/o flames
Hoe — remnant
Prowl — remnant
Languor's — tenderness
Imbibes — absorb/soak up
Unquenched — unsatisfied
Unsmotherable — inextinguishable/cant put out
Ferocity — fierceness
Looms — rises before

Theme: Triumph over exploitation/pathetic recreation of hardship of endurance of SA people

Form:
Regulated form
5 stanzas with 4 lines with same rhyme pattern= 5 quatrains
Stanzas relate because of pattern
Rhyme scheme: ABAB / CDCD / EFFE / GHGH / IJIJ

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
Serious

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
Foreboding

The Zulu Girl

Roy Campbell (1901–1957)
Modern/South African Poet

Setting: Description of a hot landscape where labourers work. Simply an observation of a Zulu woman feeding her child. Closer it becomes clear it's about oppression of women.

Sympathy/admiration

Epithet—adjectives of similar meaning

Not a wife—lost tradition to modern world

Gang = people instead of individuals/no identity/forced to work/no individuality/identity.

1 When in the sun the hot red acres smoulder

2 Down where the sweating gang its labour plies

3 A girl flings down her hoe, and from her shoulder

4 Unslings her child tormented by flies.

Malnourished

Girl flings her hoe to feed her child= rebellious act
Mass production vs. reproduction responsibilities.

5 She takes him to a ring of shadow pooled

Metaphor: coolness of a shadow = pool

6 By the thorn-tree: purpled with the blood of ticks,

The care that the mother shows for her child: looking for ticks + lice = emphasizes the poor conditions in which they're forced to live.

7 While her sharp nails, in slow caresses ruled

8 Prowl through his hair with sharp electric clicks.

Metaphor: fierce animal—shows protective nature of mother

Onomatopoeia: hard + sharp sound

Onomatopoeia

9 His sleepy mouth, plugged by the heavy nipple,

Weary/unenthusiastic/hopeless

10 Tugs like a puppy, grunting as he feels;

11 Through his frail nerves her own deep languor's ripple

Simile: L10—innocent/harmless + natural activity
L12—more than nutritional sustenance
Pain + sadness of history— great river

12 Like a broad river sighing through the reeds.

Woman breastfeeds her child. Plugged—immense hunger: He's hungry + tugs her nipple. How people are viewed: Puppy=child
Dog=mom
Mom doesn't see her child like this. She feels overwhelming tenderness.

13 Yet in that drowsy stream his flesh imbibes

Paradox: he drinks milk/she drinks from the river

Personification—sighing—groaning/tired after hard work.

14 And old unquenched, unsmotherable heat-

15 The curbed ferocity of beaten tribes,

Alliteration: forceful pattern L15-16

16 The sullen dignity of their defeat.

Metaphor: unstoppable African spirit. Underlying message = child is symbol of Zulu nation
L14—refers to fierce warriors of Zulu tribe. Strength of Zulu people still exist despite oppression.

Life has value: important life process

Gloomy silence

Not alone/abandoned
Tradition of human struggle + survival

17 Her body looms above him like a hill

Looking up at her from child eyes
Impressive statuesque—shielding + protecting

18 Within whose shade a village lies at rest,

Simile: protects all oppressed children. Mother metaphorically becomes a hill that overshadows a whole village. No longer just the mother of the child she represents all the mothers of all the children of the oppressed.

19 Or the first cloud so terrible and still

20 That bears the coming harvest in its breast.

Not final—Day of reckoning is inevitable

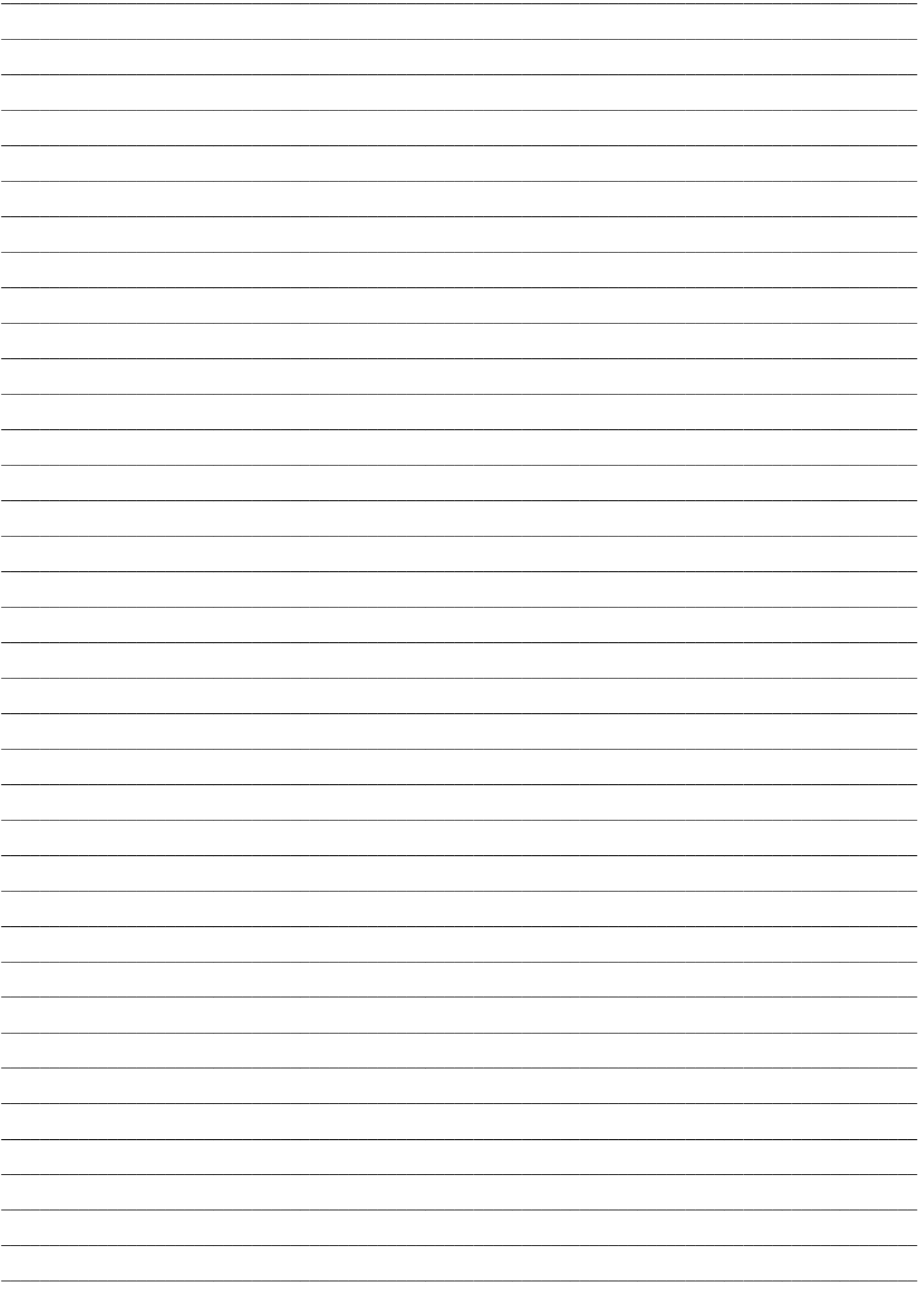
Cloud that brings the rain that'll lead to a harvest. Metaphor: children of the oppressed will one day reap the harvest of their suffering they'll overcome their oppression with the help from their mothers like the 'Zulu Girl' in the poem.

Personification: revolution/freedom

Words relating to heat:
→ Sun
→ Hot
→ Red
→ Smoulder
→ Sweating
→ Unquenched

Land is almost too hot to bear + could burst into flames.

Men = culture
Women = Nature



Motho ke Motho ka Batho Babang (A Person is a Person Because of Other People)

Jeremy Cronin (1949-)
Political/Activist/Protest

Glossary
Wat maak hy daar?—what is he doing there?
Baas—boss
Ubuntu—humanity towards others/showing compassion towards people

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
Intimate

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
Thoughtful

Theme:
Resistance
Communication

Form:
Visual layout—narrative presented on the left
Translation in brackets

Sound Devices:
Ironic—w/o any formal/sound devices centred on sound + lack of it.

Poetic Devices:
Punctuation + typography (the way it's printed/set-out) to convey the poet's message
Use of italics for different purposes as well as the use of dashes. The use of italics in line 20 + 22 indicate direct speech.
Use of present tense – content feels immediate
Last stages—feels as if we're sharing the cell + watching signals with the speaker.

Poem captures scene of one prisoner communicating with another discreetly under watchful eye of a warder. Cleverness shown maintaining human contact communicating with sign language in defiance of the deprivation of imprisonment. Illustrates truth about the human condition. Cruelty of isolation as a form of punishment and favoured treatment of political prisoners

1 By holding my mirror out of the window I see

2 Clear to the end of the passage.

3 There's a person down there.

4 A prisoner polishing a doorhandle.

5 In the mirror I see him see

6 My face in the mirror,

7 I see the fingertips of his free hand

8 Bunch together, as if to make

9 An object the size of a badge

10 Which travels up to his forehead

11 The place of an imaginary cap.

12 (This means: A warder.)

13 Two fingers are extended in a vee

14 And wiggle like two antennae.

15 (He's being watched.)

16 A finger of his free hand makes a watch-hand's arc

17 On the wrist of his polishing arm without

18 Disrupting the slow-slow rhythm of his work.

19 (Later. Maybe, later we can speak.)

20 *Hey! Wat maak jy daar?*

21 –a voice from around the corner.

22 *No. Just polishing baas.*

23 He turns his back to me, now watch

24 His free hand, the talkative one,

25 Slips quietly behind

26 –Strength brother, it says,

27 In my mirror,

28 A black fist.

Time-wasting chores

Link to guard

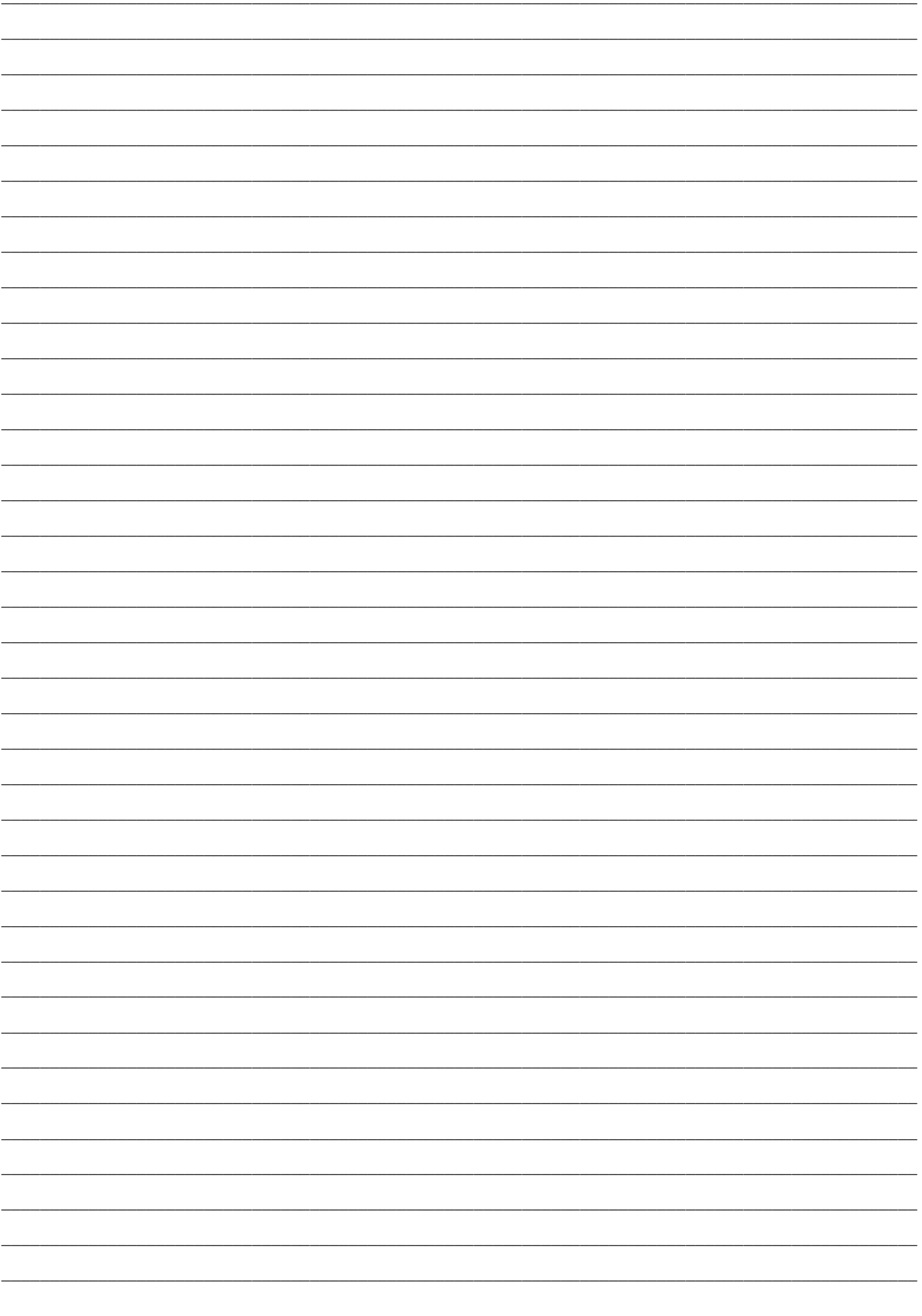
Translation in brackets
Format of this translation/explanation is varied as the poem progresses
1st insertion announces itself as an explanation
2nd L15
3rd L19 give explanations directly

Italics—indicate direct speech

Personified: commenting on sound by emphasizing its absence.

Most effective that L26 also written this way as the prisoners are communicating so effectively they may as well use direct speech.

Last insertions lose the brackets as if the reader has now learned the poem's language + no longer needs them



Funeral Blues

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907–1973)

Modern/Political Poet

Most of his poems focus on social ills + concern with the working of the mind.

Glossary

Muffled—wrapped to deaden the sound
 Crepe—light crinkled fabric
 Dismantle—take apart
 Blues—American word for a sad song
 Lament—to express grief/mourn

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
 Harsh/Serious

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
 Sadness/empathy

Theme: Death + grief
 Speaker wants the world to come to an end

Form:
 Elegiac: resembling an elegy (expressing sorrow)
 4 quatrains (4 stanzas of 4 lines)
 Rhyme scheme: AABB/CCDD/EEFF/GGHH
 Iambic pentameter

Expression of grief and heart-ache.
 He describes his pain and links his overwhelming emotion of despair to world around him.

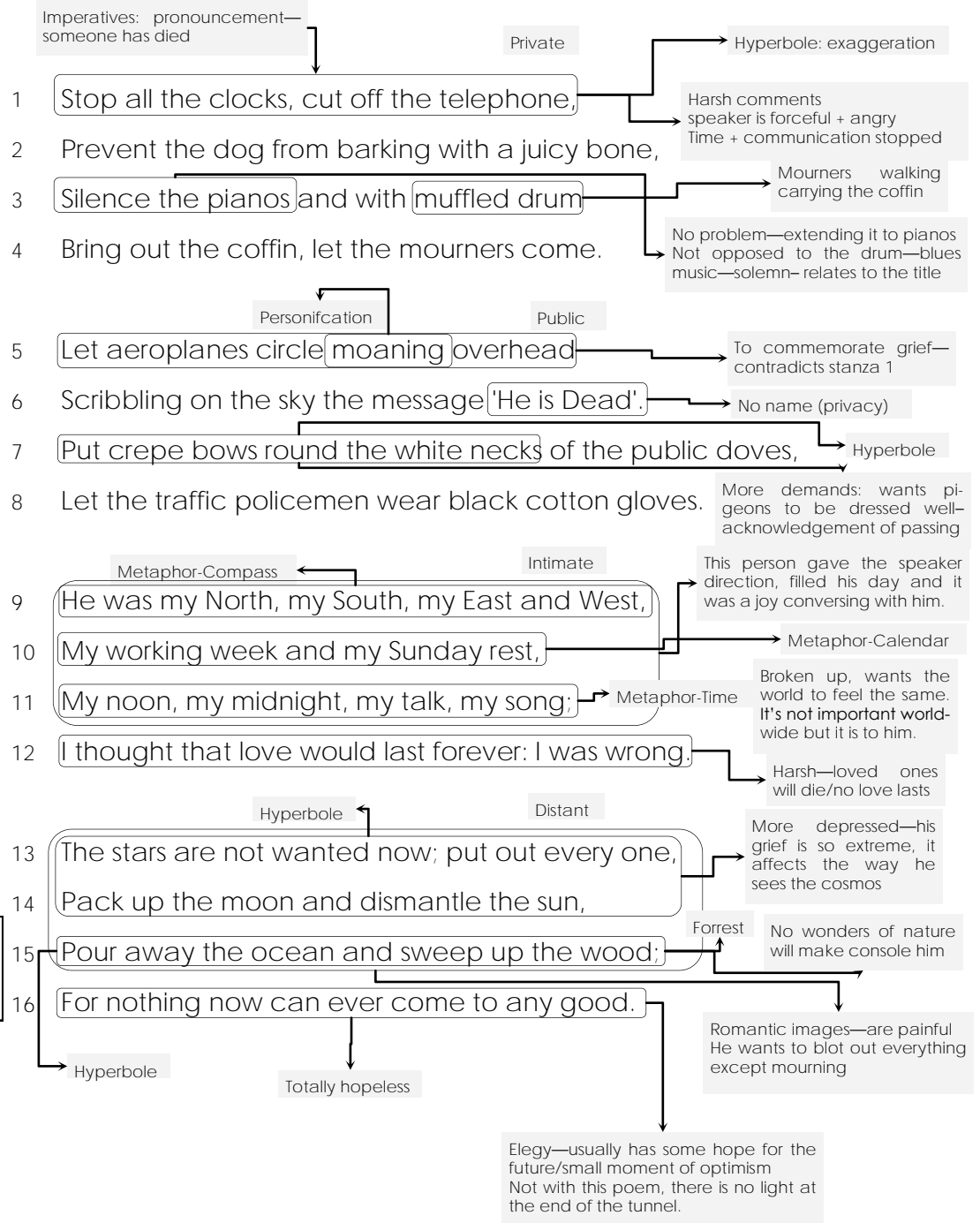
Reference to 'clocks'; 'telephone'; 'dog' 'piano's' examines the mourner's reaction to his immediate domestic surroundings, the lens of loss.

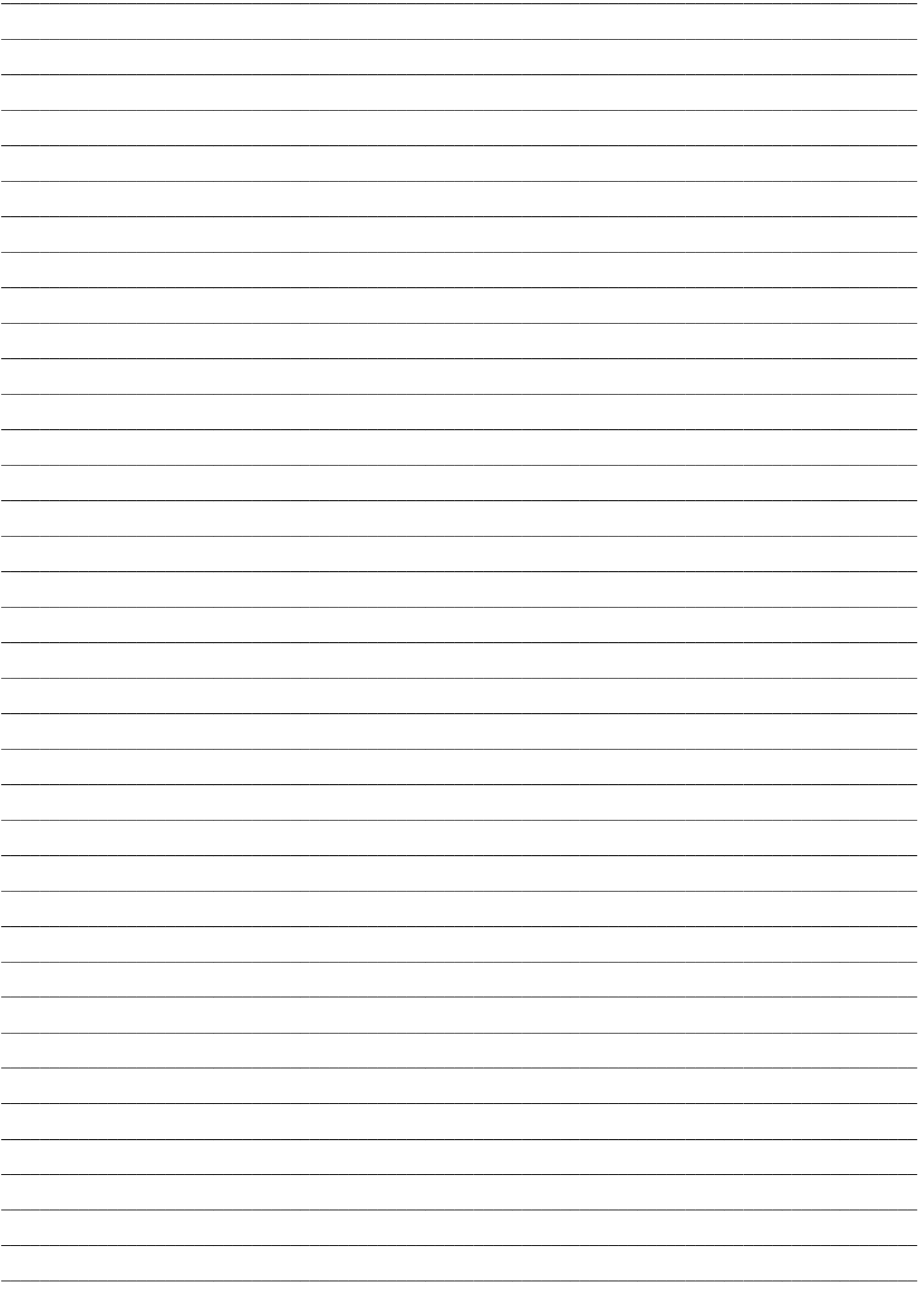
Poem then expands the surroundings to the public arena with 'aeroplane' 'doves' 'traffic policemen'

L8 finally ends in the universal sphere of 'stars' 'moon' 'sun' 'ocean' 'wood'

3rd stanza describes their relationship + gives a personal account of what the dead man meant to the speaker

Stanzas Contrasting Themes
 Public vs. private (Stanza 1+2)
 Intimate vs. Distant (Stanza 3+4)





A Hard Frost

Cecil Day-Lewis (1904 – 1972)

Romantic/Modern

Describes the appearance of a hard frost that formed overnight. Patterns of frost form on glass + how it sparkles in morning sunlight

Glossary

Changeling — something exchanged secretly
 Precocious — developed earlier than usual
 Catkin — spiky flower
 Maydrift — remnant
 Elms — remnant
 Amorphous — w/o a form
 Mockery — absurd imitation
 Disconsolate — w/o comfort/unhappily
 Aconite — flower similar to buttercup
 Snowdrop — drooping white flower
 Flounce — impatient movement
 Filigree — ornamental + delicate
 Clods — lumps of earth
 Unclenches — loosens

Theme:
 Focuses on the tension between appearance + reality

Form:
 2 stanzas—similar length
 No traditional rhyme scheme + lines + stanza arrangement set up to support content

Sound Devices

No overt reference to sound.

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
 Whimsical

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
 Mesmerising

1st Stanza—describes the scene

2nd Stanza—comments on the scene + exposes the truth of the 1st stanza

1 A frost came in the night and stole my world
 2 And left this changeling for it - a precocious
 3 Image of spring, too brilliant to be true:
 4 White lilac on the window-pane, each grass-blade
 5 Furred like a catkin, maydrift loading the hedge.
 6 The elms behind the house are elms no longer
 7 But blossom in crystal, stems of the mist
 8 That hangs yet in the valley below, amorphous
 9 As the blind tissue whence creation formed.
 10 The sun looks out and the fields blaze with diamonds
 11 Mockery spring, to lend this bridal gear
 12 For a few hours to a raw country maid,
 13 Then leave her all disconsolate with old fairings
 14 Of aconite and snowdrop! No, not here
 15 Amid this flounce and filigree of death
 16 Is the real transformation scene in progress,
 17 But deep below where frost
 18 Worrying the stiff clods unclenches their
 19 Grip on the seed and lets
 20 the future breathe.

Speaker comments on how the world's appearance has been altered by a layer of frost—so sudden it almost seems spring-like (opposite in fact)

Glitter + sparkle of reflected frost creates a bright image but the speaker admits this is too 'brilliant to be true'.

Extended metaphor: compare the image of frost on a window to different features of spring.

Imagery suggests spring flowers + freshness of new growth 'maydrift'.

L7 despite the glittering beauty the appearance is deceiving. Accuses the frost of theft—stolen away expected scene + replace it with fake ... frost=given magical mystical powers in its ability to accomplish this transformation.

Oppose to this fake appearance of spring the 'real' spring is beginning to make itself felt unnoticeably underground

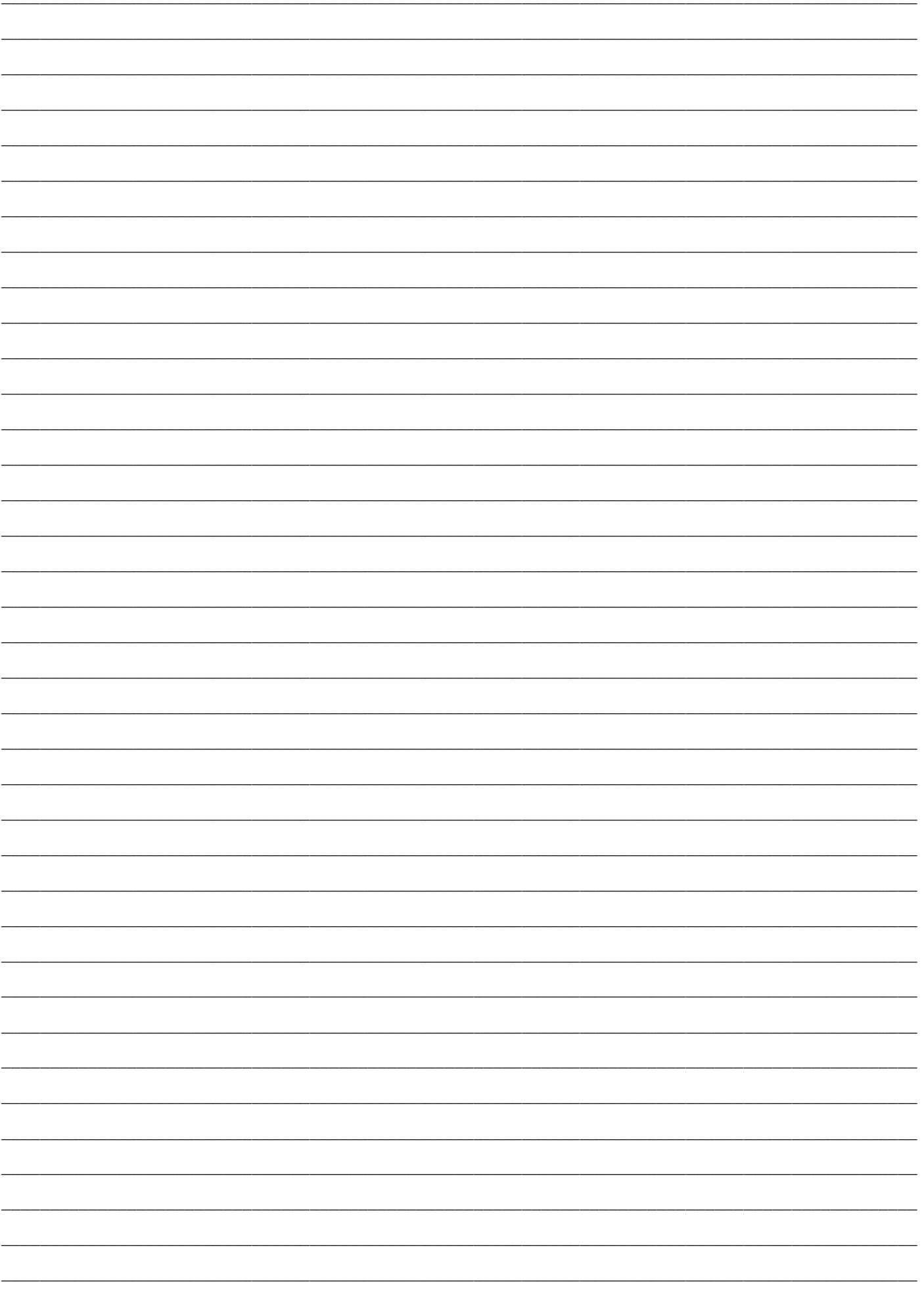
The heavy coating of frost would blanket the world in sharp silence + the brittle crispness of this is implied in the mention of 'crystal' 'diamonds' L7+10

Metaphor: comparing the white frost blanket to a wedding dress. contains quite a disapproving tone.

The wedding dress is being lent to a country maid for a few hours but she will be left terribly sad when she has to return it + resume her usual boring appearance.

Alliteration: suggests the disapproving tone of the speaker.

Personification: image of a contest of strength taking place beneath the ground where the earth is surrendering its frozen hold to the power of spring. This allows the seeds the chance to sprout and break out of the soil to promise future life to go.



Glossary
 Sinister— evil/menacing
 Din — loud noise
 Jagged— pointy
 Pelting— rain falling fast + hard

Theme:
 Natural disaster. Overcoming oppression. Chaos.

Form:
 Two parts which divide the content into the general and the specific.

Wind builds up 4 times (4 interwoven stanzas) like a main act in a plot.

The irregular no. of words on a line, with many single-word lines, captures the unpredictable progress of the wind and the accompanying clouds. This technique is also evident in the second part of the poem, where the frantic movement of the village women as they 'Dart about/In and out/Madly' (lines 22- 24) is physically demonstrated by the line divisions.

Sound Devices:
 This poem utilises sound effectively. Much use is made of onomatopoeia as the wind is 'whirling' (lines 7 and 19) and it 'whistles' (lines 14 and 25). The noise in the village has the screams of children competing with 'the din of whirling wind' (line 19). As the storm gets closer, its imminent arrival is heralded by the onomatopoeia of the 'Rumble, tremble, and crack' (line 31) of the thunder, and the impact of lightning striking the earth.

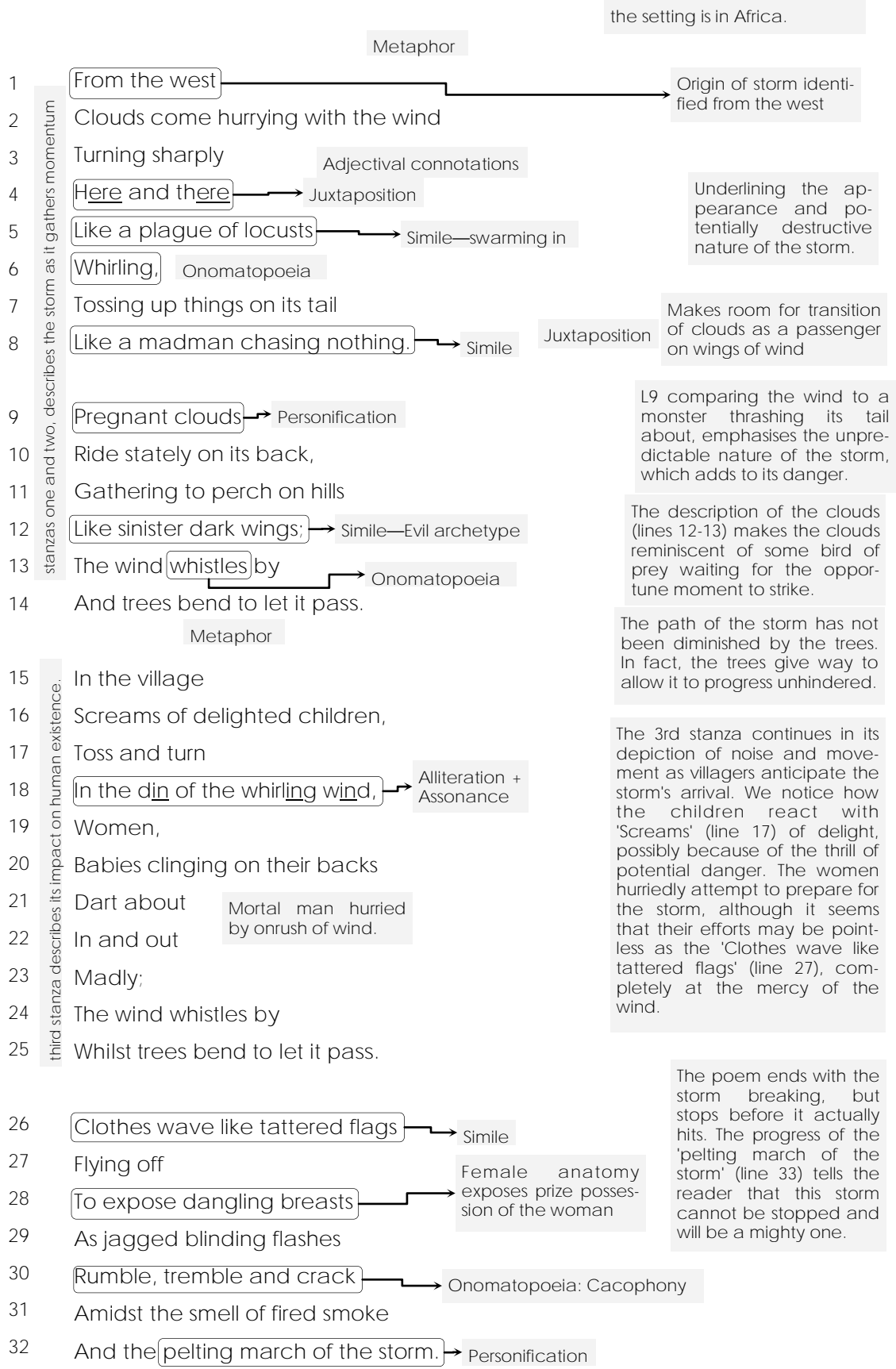
Repetition L 14-15 + 25-26
 Almost exactly the same; 'And' has been replaced with 'Whilst'.

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
 Outraged/fierce

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
 Chaos/distressed

An Africa Thunderstorm

David Rubadiri (1930-)
 Post-modern/colonial/African Poet



the setting is in Africa.

Origin of storm identified from the west

Underlining the appearance and potentially destructive nature of the storm.

Makes room for transition of clouds as a passenger on wings of wind

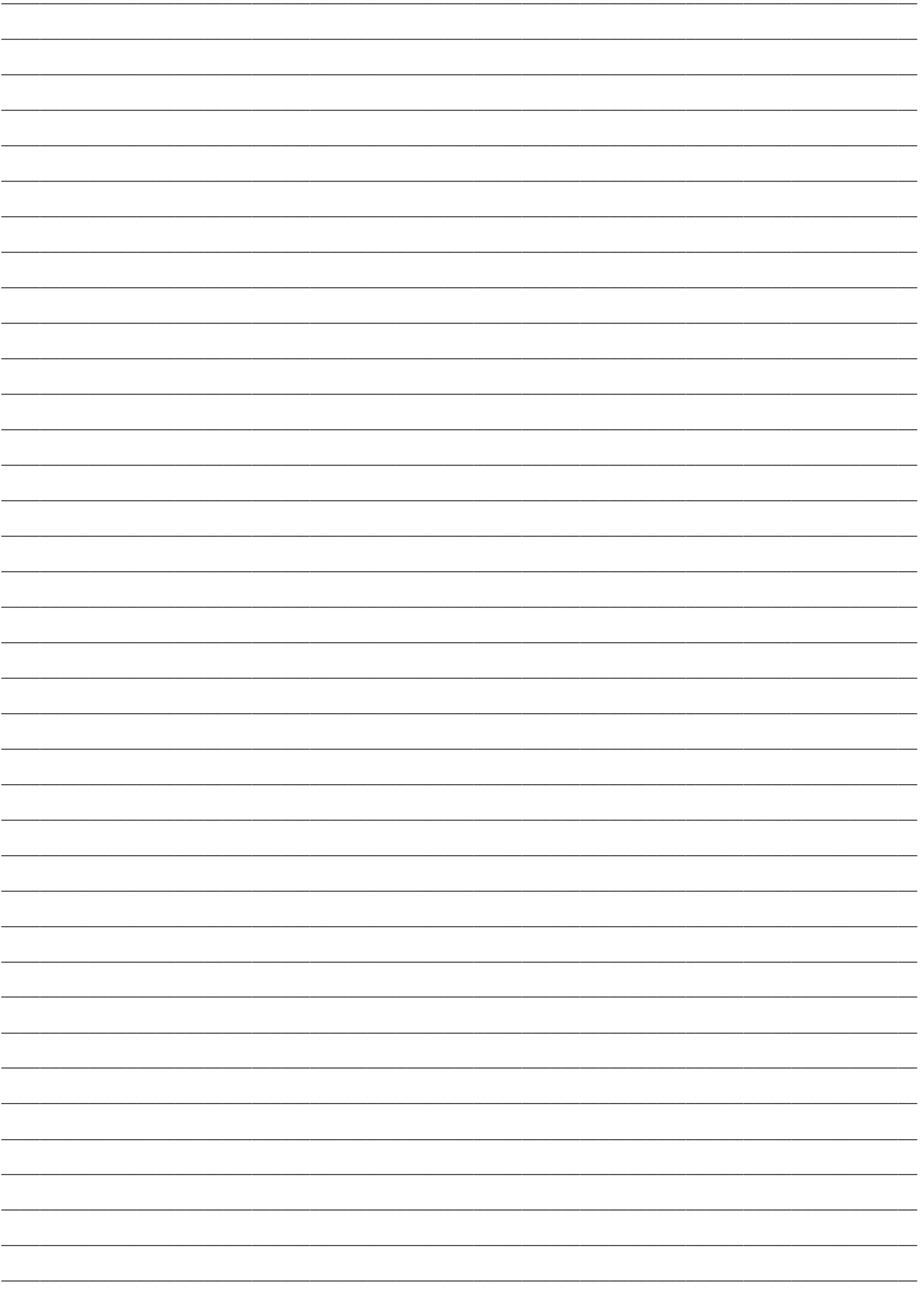
L9 comparing the wind to a monster thrashing its tail about, emphasises the unpredictable nature of the storm, which adds to its danger.

The description of the clouds (lines 12-13) makes the clouds reminiscent of some bird of prey waiting for the opportune moment to strike.

The path of the storm has not been diminished by the trees. In fact, the trees give way to allow it to progress unhindered.

The 3rd stanza continues in its depiction of noise and movement as villagers anticipate the storm's arrival. We notice how the children react with 'Screams' (line 17) of delight, possibly because of the thrill of potential danger. The women hurriedly attempt to prepare for the storm, although it seems that their efforts may be pointless as the 'Clothes wave like tattered flags' (line 27), completely at the mercy of the wind.

The poem ends with the storm breaking, but stops before it actually hits. The progress of the 'pelting march of the storm' (line 33) tells the reader that this storm cannot be stopped and will be a mighty one.



An African Elegy

Ben Okri (1959–)

Post-modern/colonial/African Poet

Glossary

Elegy — mournful poem focuses on death

Shalt — shall/will do

Miracles — acts of God

Destiny — inescapable fate

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)

Not mournful reflective + thoughtful

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)

Hopeful

Theme:

One who forgets suffering no longer suffers. Poverty, pain, hope, miracles, destiny, time.

Stages:

1. Grief
2. Sorrow
3. Praise

Form:

Stanza of 5 lines

Regular form with distinct pattern

Variety of line lengths

Short lines—isolated from enclosing lines + tend to stand out for being short

Line breaks add an additional dimension to the interpretation of the poem—promotes multiple interpretations

Sound Devices:

demands to be read aloud. The pauses, bound by the punctuation and line breaks, create a rhythm that contributes significantly to the reader's appreciation and understanding of the poem.

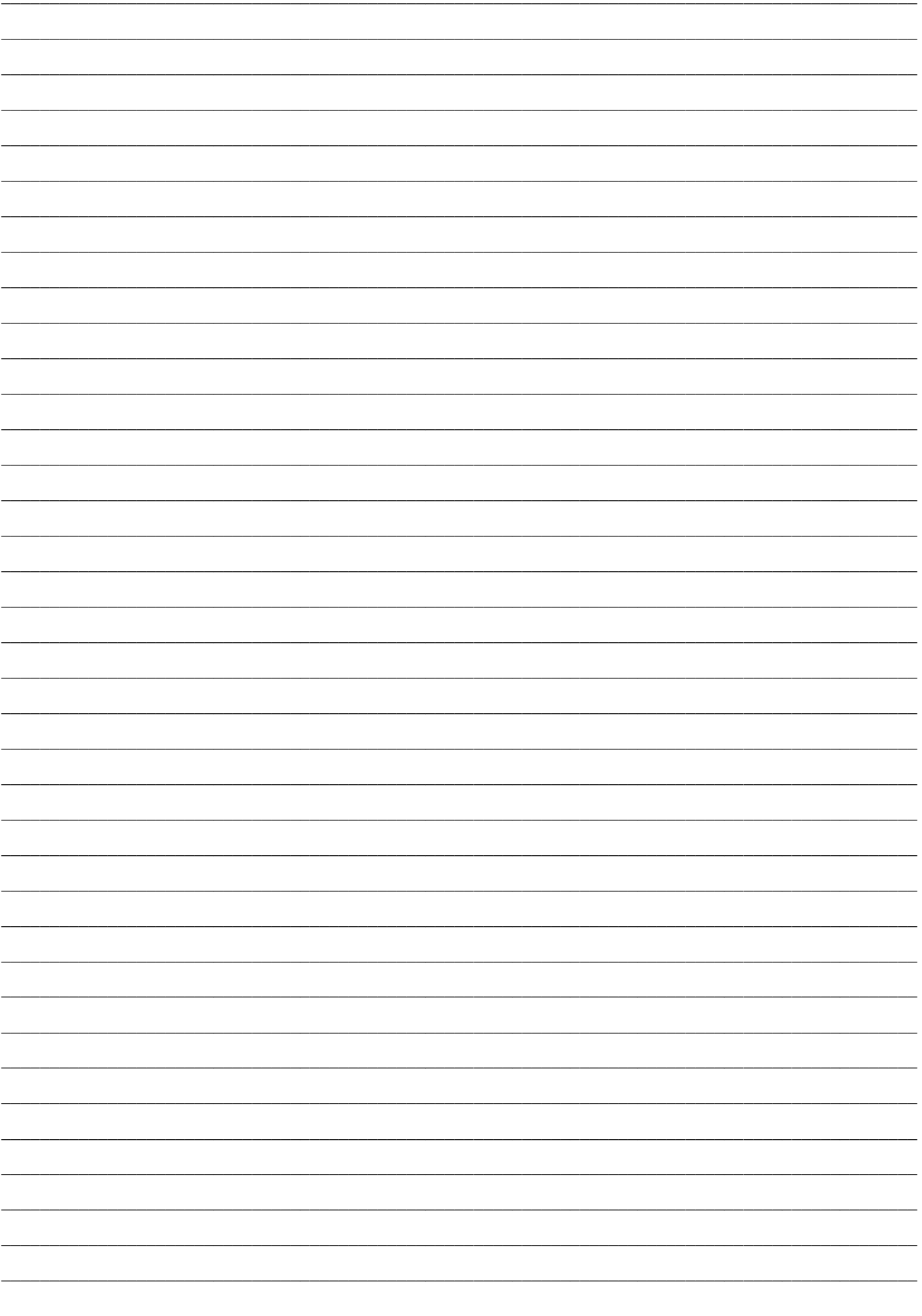
Language Devices:

The poet's diction reflects his interest in African mysticism. He uses words that have religious overtones. He implies that all Africans are able to bear poverty and hardship because they 'are the miracles that God made' (line 1).

Understanding:

The speaker asks the unique African spirit for answers to life's paradoxes. He explores the miracle of what being African means to him: the endurance for suffering, the ability to find joy and beauty in the midst of pain, a spiritual union with nature's bounty, and an irrepressible sense of optimism despite all indicators pointing in the opposite direction. The speaker seems to believe that the tendency to hope and the sensitivity to recognise wonder is a shared trait of Africa's people.

1 We are the miracles that God made
2 To taste the bitter fruit of Time. Metaphor Oxymoron: Bitter but optimis-
3 We are precious.
4 And one day our suffering
5 Will turn into the wonders of the earth. 'We' + 'our' African culture
6 There are things that burn me now
7 Which turn golden when I am happy.
8 Do you see the mystery of our pain?
9 That we bear poverty
10 And are able to sing and dream sweet things Assonance
11 And that we never curse the air when it is warm Sensory imagery
12 Or the fruit when it tastes so good
13 Or the lights that bounce gently on the waters?
14 We bless things even in our pain. contrast
15 We bless them in silence.
16 That is why our music is so sweet.
17 It makes the air remember. Personification
18 There are secret miracles at work
19 That only Time will bring forth. Metaphor
20 I too have heard the dead singing. Personification
21 And they tell me that
22 This life is good
23 They tell me to live it gently
24 With fire, and always with hope. Optimistic Passion
25 There is wonder here
26 And there is surprise
27 In everything the unseen moves.
28 The ocean is full of songs.
29 The sky is not an enemy.
30 Destiny is our friend. Metaphor



Never gave his poem titles so editors just used the first line.

somewhere i have never travelled

E. E. Cummings (1894 - 1962)

Modern Poet

Glossary
 Frail— physically weak
 Gesture— Movement made to communicate
 Descending— moving downwards
 Rendering— causing/making

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
 Soulful/Captivated

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
 Hopeful/mysterious

Theme:
 Travel/Man vs. natural world/love/power

Form:
 No formal rhyme scheme
 5 quatrains (5 stanzas of 4 lines)
 Regular 4line stanzas + each deals with a new/separate point
 Last stanza regular rhyme scheme: ABAB

Ideas are simple but the following makes the poem seem complicated:
 Diserted syntax
 Unusual punctuation
 New words/slang

Poetic/Language Devices:
 Idea of closing + opening occurs:
 'enclose' (L3)
 'unclose' (L5)
 'closed' (L6)
 'open' (L7)
 'close' (L9)
 'shut' (L10)
 'closes + opens' (L17-18)

Uses run-on lines/enjambment. L17 skips over Content brackets to find its objects L8.

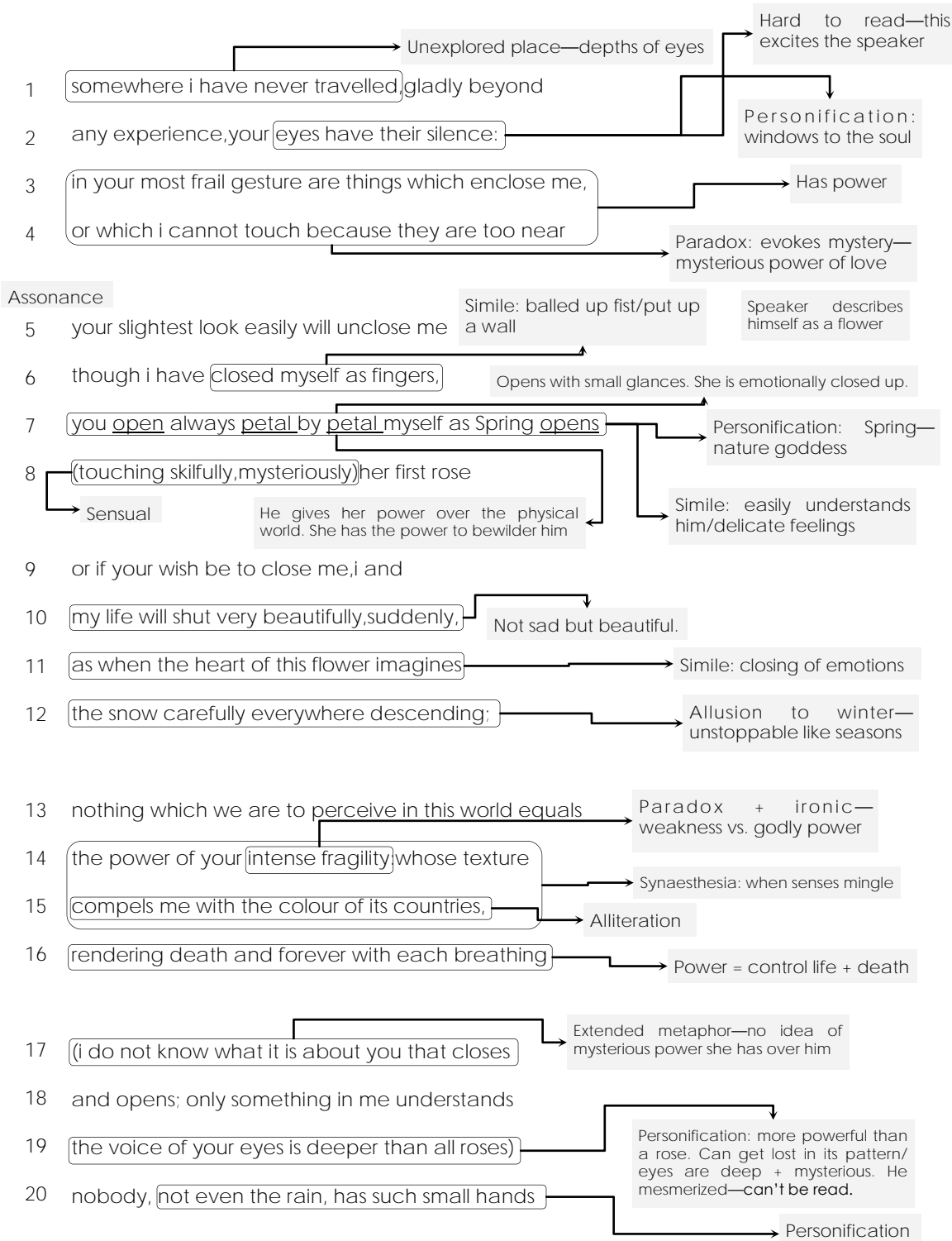
Imagery
 Similes + vivid personification, capitalization 'Spring' L7 'Rain... small hands' L20

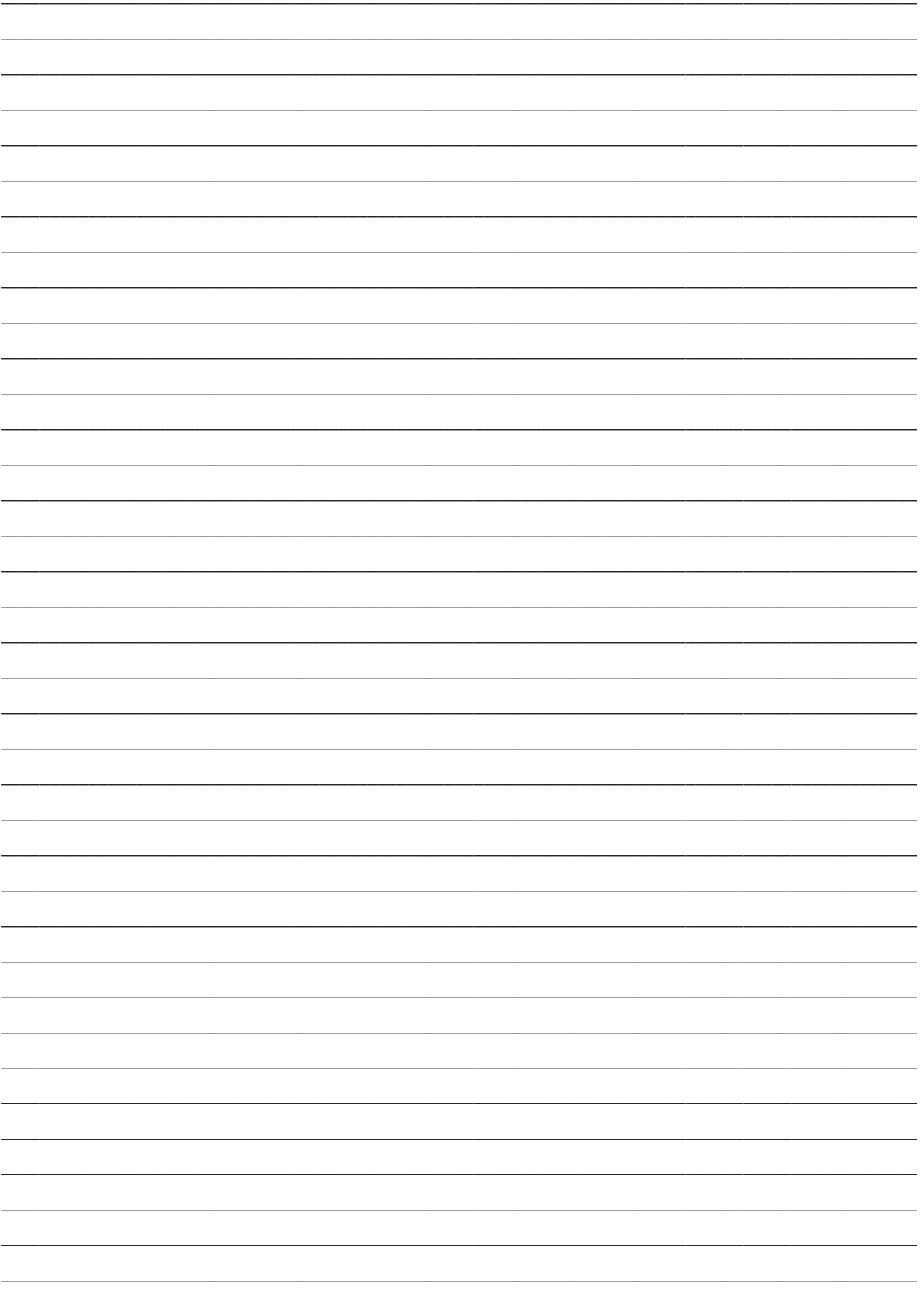
→Man + nature in harmony
 →Man as nature
 →Women are usually associated with flowers

Natural world:
 • Flowers
 • Rain
 • Seasons

Sound Devices:
 Alliteration hard 'c' L15 power to words + draws readers attention
 'enclose' L3 echoed by opposite 'unclose' L5 beloveds power—both actions are equally wondrous
 Little rhyme used 1st 4 stanzas make use of rhyme in final stanza more noticeable

Unconventional love poem—tries to understand beloved's power over him. Admits her appeal is intangible + difficult to pin-point. Images of nature + concept of travel to develop his ideas. The speaker isn't infatuated nor overcome by throes of violent passion. He believes love is transcendent/a religious conversion/connects us to something bigger/infinite + ultimately unknowable.





Glossary

The Green— public/common park
 Shalt — shall/will
 Binding— restricting
 Briars— thorny branches

Theme:

Distortion of Christian belief about future life. 'Falleness' on repression of sexuality + emotions

Form:

3 stanzas of 4 lines
 Each focuses on a different issue:
 1st— speaker's discovery
 2nd— speakers feelings about the building but expresses hope for consolation to be found in the garden
 3rd— speakers disappointment that this too has undergone drastic change

End rhymes in first 2 stanzas:
 ABCB DEFE

Internal rhymes with 'gowns' and 'rounds'; 'briars' and 'desires'

Sound Devices:

Rhythm—regular mostly due to steady meter + rhyming. However change in rhyme, pace + rhyme structures of the final two lines draws the readers attention.

Perhaps the speaker suggests that his world is now out of balance with his realisation + this new reality requires a different form of expression.

Various interpretations of the poem:

On one level it is simply a mark of the passage of time, and that as a result of human expansion, an open area of his childhood no longer exists. Speaker is in dismay, yet not particularly surprising.

However religious building that has usurped this land could imply a broader comment on organised religion and its influence on 'innocent' pleasures and freedom.

Diction = simple + straightforward, capturing natural expression of speakers experience. Innuendo is apparent as speaker doesn't express his anger, disappointment/outrage explicitly, but implies—L10+L12

Contrasts:

- Green vs. Black
- Flowers vs. Graves/Tombstones
- Flowers vs. Thorny Briars
- Playing freely vs. priests doing rounds
- Nature vs. man-made objects
- Growth vs. lifelessness (death)
- Softness/tenderness vs. hardness
- Gentleness vs. pain
- Light vs. dark
- Freedom vs. Restriction

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
 reverie and scorn indignant

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
 despondency

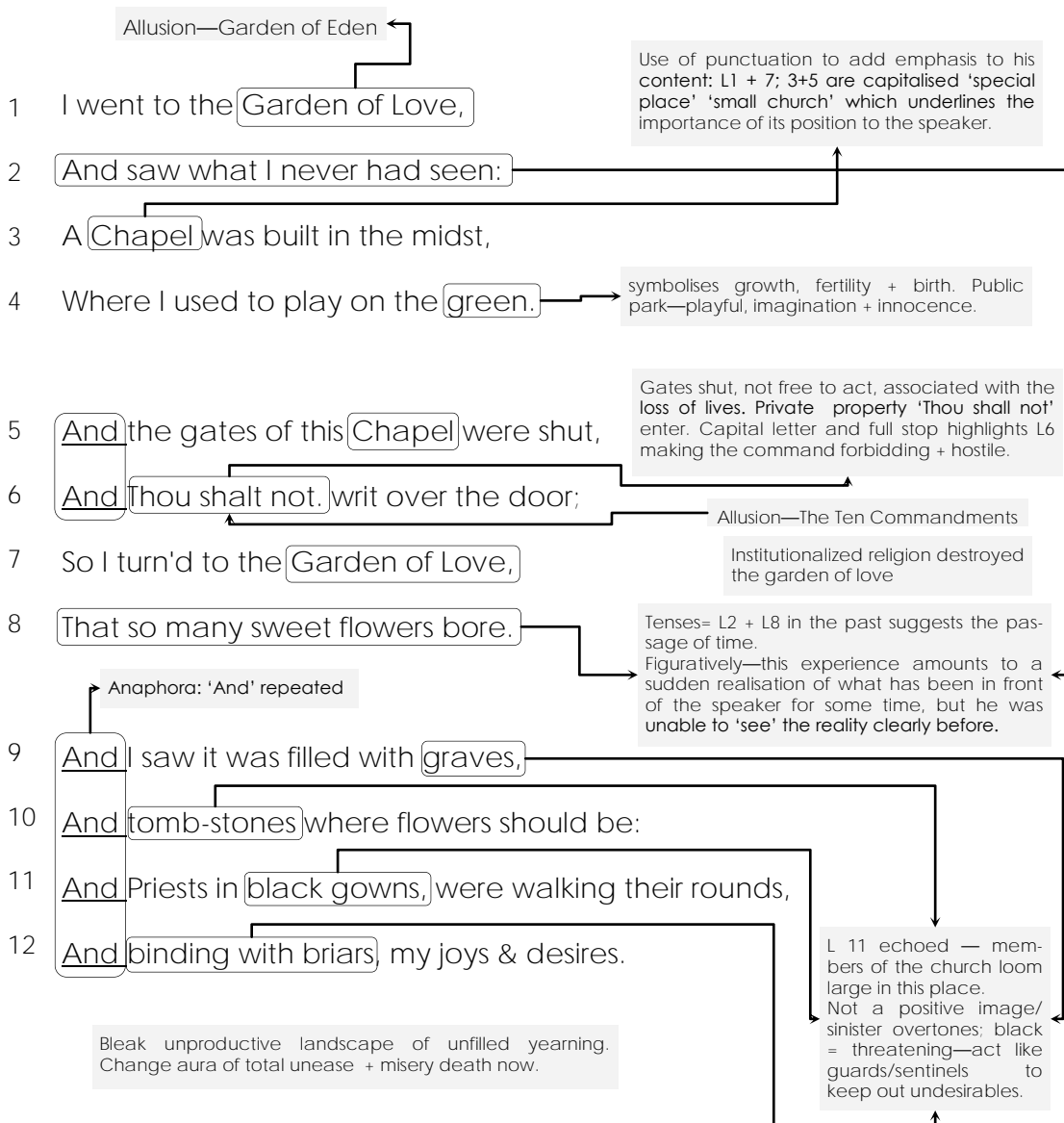
The Garden of Love

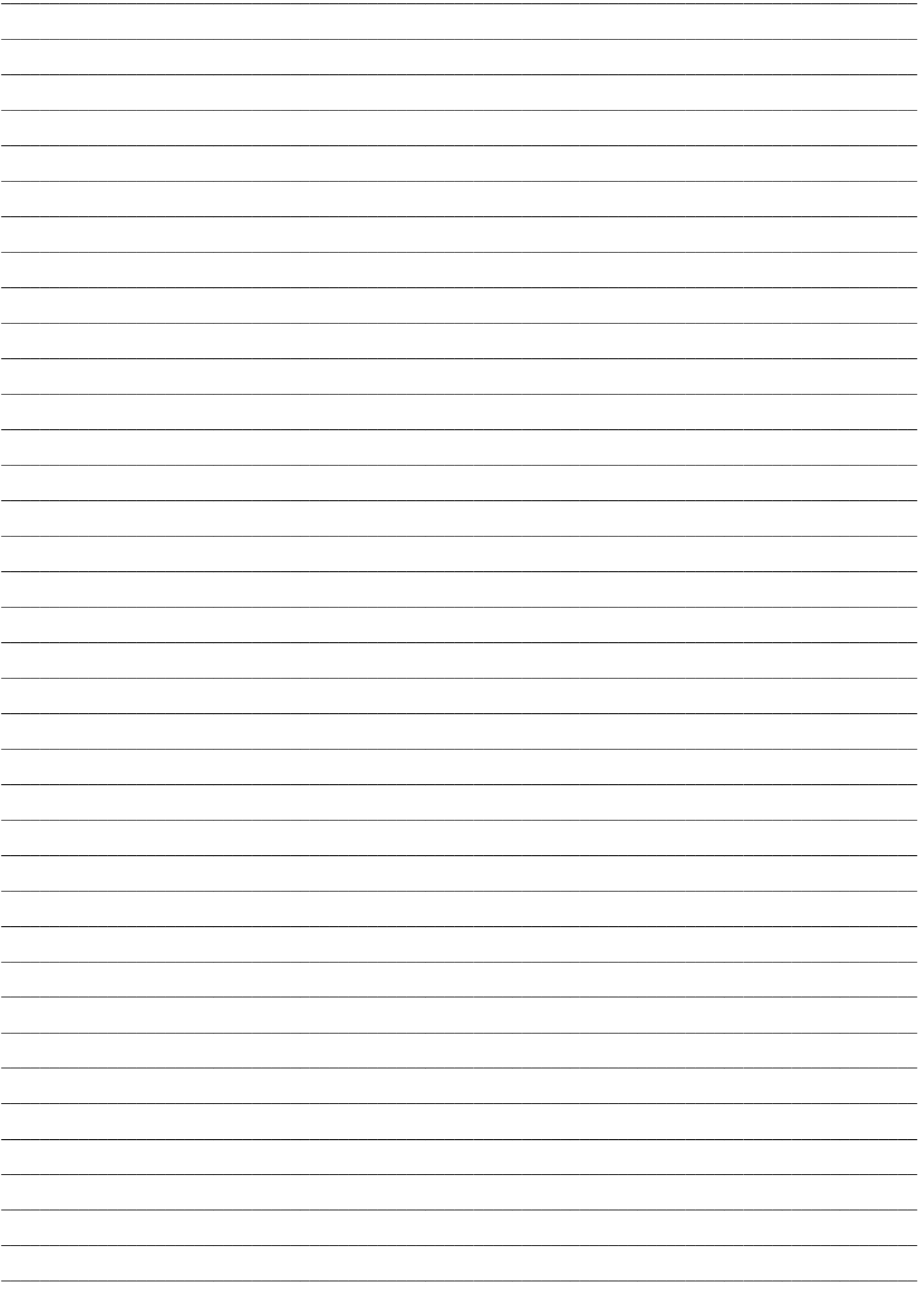
William Blake (1757–1827)

Romantic

Understanding:

The speaker describes revisiting a place he remembers from his childhood, only to find that it has been taken over by a chapel or church. He is prevented from entering, so he attempts to explore the surrounding garden instead. The place which used to be full of 'sweet flowers' (line 8) has been filled with graves and tombstones instead. Additionally, patrolling priests, in dark robes, prevent him from experiencing or reliving his 'joys & desires' (line 12). He rebels against the idea of original sin and believes that love can't be sanctioned by religion.





Felix Randal

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889)

Victorian

Ministering to Randall's soul, developed a sense of compassion + connection with the dying man. Recalls him being a big fellow = to most physically demanding job—shoeing large horses
Reflects on long illness + death of Felix Randal + comments on his own role (as priest) in caring for the dying man. More about Hopkins ministry. Ailments England 1885 cause of death

Glossary

Farrier — blacksmith shoeing horses
Mould — shape
Rambled — talked aimlessly
Anointed — blessed by a priest
Reprieve — temporary improvement
Ransom — deliverance; being saved
Quenched — stopped
Boisterous — lively
Fettle — trim the horse shoe
Drayhorse — horse pulling a wagon
Pining—to become ill/waste away

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)

Detached/matter-of-fact then endearing

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)

relief→sympathy→impatience→
acceptance→comfort→
admiration→ends with a triumphant + fiercely energetic mood

Theme:
Religion & Nature

Form:

Petrarchan/Italian Sonnet
This sonnet consists of two a-b-b-a rhymed quatrains (the octave) followed by two rhymed c-c-d stanzas making up the sestet.
ABBA / ABBA / CDC / CDC
Each section has a particular function, allowing Hopkins to develop his theme.

Four fatal ailments:

→ Melancholy
→ Phlegm
→ Blood
→ Bile

The octave states the situation and establishes the background leading up to Randal's death.

1 Felix Randal the farrier, O is he dead then? **my duty all ended,**

Reaction to news—neither sorrow/joy

2 **Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome**

Doesn't speak of good times—just his greatness diminished

3 Pining, pinning, till time when reason rambled in it, and some

4 **Fatal four** disorders, fleshed there, all contended?

Alliteration

Illness related to job—losing shape like a piece of metal

5 **Sickness broke him.** Impatient, he cursed at first, but **mended**

Physical + spiritual health
Prepared his soul for the afterlife

6 Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some

7 Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom

Object of Hopkins ministry—extreme unction—not focused on death but Hopkins work.

8 Tendered to him. Ah well, **God** rest him all **road** ever he **offended!**

The sestet allows the speaker's emotional state to find voice as he addresses the dead man directly, and expresses his regard for him. His own sense of loss and sorrow is made explicit in this section of the poem.

9 This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.

Significant that the entire stanza is about mutual aspect of relationship

10 My tongue had taught thee comfort, **touch** had quenched **thy tears,**

Connection between them portrays relationship as reciprocal

11 **Thy tears** that **touched** my heart, child, **Felix, poor Felix Randal;**

Alliteration

Repetition: as if comforting a distressed child

12 How far from then forethought of, **all thy more boisterous years,**

Life—productive, lively + boisterous
Death—weak, cursing + unlikeable

13 When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,

14 Didst fettle for the **great grey** **dray**horse his bright and battering sandal!

Assonance

Hopkins own disenchantment with his vocation

Sound Devices:

Poem demands to be read aloud. The rhythm of pauses and flow is made clear by the punctuation and word order.

In the first line, three points are made, separated by the commas and the question mark. The use of alliteration in 'hardy- handsome' (line 2), 'reason rambled' (line 3) and 'Fatal four' (line 4) not only increases the impact of the words due to their sound, but also due to the linking of these words.

The final two lines of the poem create a strong rhythm as the short phrases 'random grim forge', 'powerful amidst peers' (line 13), 'great grey drayhorse' and 'bright and battering sandal' (line 14) balance each other and cumulatively build the image of strength.

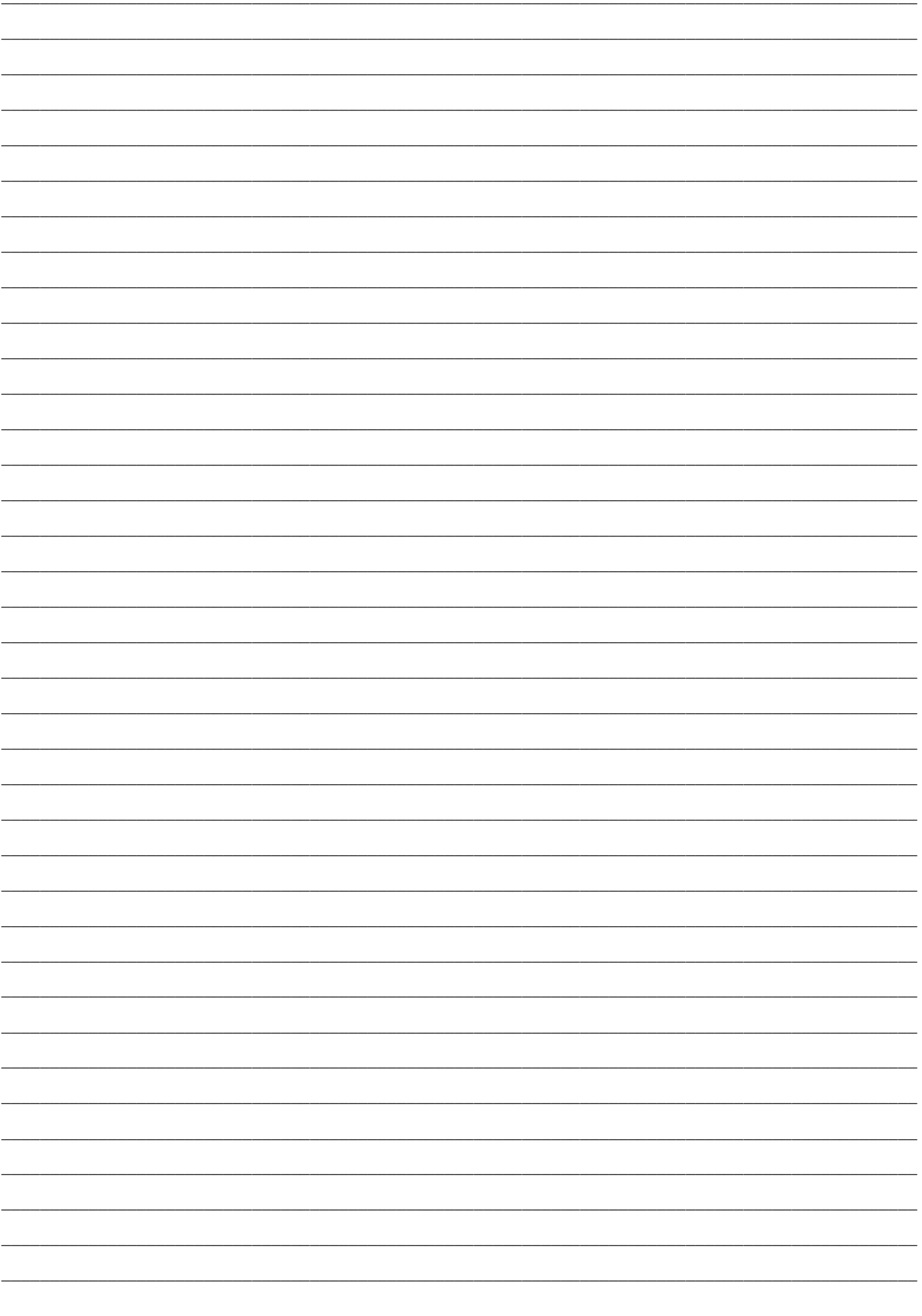
Poetic Devices:

A notable feature of this sonnet is the shift in tone. The opening line comes across as matter-of-fact, whereas the sestet provides a stark contrast as the raw feelings of the speaker become clear. The tone changes to one of loss and grief.

Hopkins uses his structure to establish some distinct contrasts. He shows us the strapping healthy Randal who once was 'powerful amidst peers' (line 13) and we can then draw the contrast with the 'pining, pinning' (line 3) man who was broken by 'some/Fatal four disorders' (lines 3-4).

A contrast is also provided by describing the spiritual state of Randal who acquires a 'heavenlier heart' (line 6) after time spent with the speaker. This time spent together also causes the development of their relationship from perhaps one of mutual tolerance to a close one where each genuinely cared for the other.

Hopkins' use of compound adjectives like 'hardy-handsome' (line 2) gives his poem a liveliness and freshness. The diction of the last stanza lends power to the content, as the reader can visualise Felix Randal 'at the random grim forge' (line 13) performing impressive physical feats.



Vultures

Chinua Achebe (1930–2013)
African Poet/Author

A person or a thing that preys greedily and ruthlessly on others, especially the helpless.

Glossary

- Despondent—miserable
- Drizzle—light rain
- Harbinger—messengers
- Gross—unpleasant
- Gorged—overate
- Remnant—remains
- Telescopic—able to see far
- Channel-house—place where bodies are kept
- Coil—curl
- Offspring—children
- Bounteous—plentiful
- Providence—fate/God
- Grants—gives
- Ogre—monster
- Encapsulated—closed in
- Kindred—family
- Perpetuity—everlasting

Tone: (Author's attitude or feelings about the subject)
Depressing/miserable

Mood: (Readers emotions from reading the text)
Grim/gloomy

The opening scene continues with evocative imagery, prompting an emotional response from the reader.

The poet establishes a depressing mood in the poem through the 'greyness' (line 1) and 'drizzle' (line 2) of the pre-dawn setting where even the dawn is 'despondent' (line 2).

The poem begins with a description of the vultures that makes them seem repulsive and gory. However, they are also portrayed as showing affection, which only makes their behaviour more revolting.

1 In the greyness
2 and drizzle of one despondent

Alliteration

3 dawn unstirred by harbingers

4 of sunbreak a vulture

5 perching high on broken

6 bones of a dead tree → Carcass/tree

7 nestled close to his

8 mate his smooth

9 bashed-in head, a pebble

10 on a stem rooted in

11 a dump of gross

12 feathers, inclined affectionately

13 to hers. Yesterday they picked

14 the eyes of a swollen

15 corpse in a water-logged

16 trench and ate the

17 things in its bowel. Full

18 gorged they chose their roost

19 keeping the hollowed remnant

20 in easy range of cold

21 telescopic eyes... → Mechanical feel—not animal

22 Strange

23 indeed how love in other → Personified—love cant pick. Contrasts: Light—love Dark—death (charnel-house)

24 ways so particular

25 will pick a corner

26 in that charnel-house

27 tidy it and coil up there, perhaps

28 even fall asleep - her face → Lined/gunned to the wall Can't face the atrocity

29 turned to the wall

30 ...Thus the Commandant at Belsen

31 Camp going home for

32 the day with fumes of → Powerful imagery

33 human roast clinging → Only physical description of the Commandant

34 rebelliously to his hairy

35 nostrils will stop

36 at the wayside sweet-shop

37 and pick up a chocolate → Kind gesture—shows 2 sides

38 for his tender offspring

39 waiting at home for Daddy's

40 return...

41 Praise bounteous → Empathetic + contrasts Solace in small mercy

42 providence if you will

43 that grants even an ogre → Soft side

44 a tiny glow-worm

45 tenderness encapsulated → Warmth is trapped

46 in icy caverns of a cruel

47 heart or else despair

48 for in the very germ

49 of that kindred love is → Peak in psyche of Commandant—views softer side as a curse/germ

50 lodged the perpetuity

51 of evil.

Everlasting bleak note

Consider the description of the vultures' appearance perched on 'broken/bone' (lines 5-6) and the 'bashed-in head' (line 9) that is grotesquely prominent above the 'gross' (line 11) feathers. The strong imagery of their picking at the 'swollen/corpse' (lines 14-15) to devour the 'things in its bowel' (line 17) effectively disgusts the reader.

Yet we are also told that the scavengers 'nestled' (line 7) 'affectionately' (line 12), which would normally generate a positive response. However, in this instance, the contrast established between the birds' warmth towards each other and their revolting practices, makes their 'cold/telescopic eyes' (lines 20-21) all the more disturbing.

Vulture + Commandant comparison

The second section of the poem describes the Commandant of Belsen, which was a Nazi concentration camp where thousands of Jewish people were murdered and their bodies burned during World War II. As with the vultures, the Commandant's love for his family makes his evil deeds in being responsible for thousands of deaths seem even worse.

The description of the vultures is in the past tense, while the Belsen Commandant is described in the present tense. This seems to suggest that evil is always present. The use of 'perpetuity' (line 50) reinforces this idea.

Of course there is a huge difference between the behaviour of the vultures and that of the Nazis. The vultures perform a vital ecological service, and act on instinct. The humans, who have the ability to make moral decisions, are where the real evil resides.

The shift to focus on human behaviour in the second section of the poem is even more disturbing. The jarring images of the Commandant, with 'fumes of/human roast clinging/rebelliously to his hairy/nostrils' (lines 32-35) who then buys a chocolate for his 'tender offspring' (line 38) is alarming and makes the reader feel uncomfortable.

Theme:
Omnipresence of evil. Even warm/loving creatures can be evil

Form:
Enjambment—fast pace
4 stanzas
Free verse
No rhyme pattern
Each section of the poem is marked by a line indentation rather than a new stanza. This could possibly indicate how one idea flows to the next as the poem develops.
The arrangement of lines appears to be almost like a list, a building up of evidence. The short lines running on to the next could suggest a continuous flow of content that supports the poet's theme.

Sound Devices:
Notice the use of alliteration in the final section where the providence 'grants' an 'ogre' a 'glow-worm/tenderness' (lines 43-45), while the harsh 'c' use in 'caverns' and 'cruel' (line 46) refer back to the 'cold' (line 20) eyes of the vulture.

Achebe expresses his theme powerfully due to his choice of diction, the disturbing imagery created, and the use of contrast.

The poem appears to offer us two different conclusions. This leaves the reader with a sense of both hope and of despair.

