

Introduction to Poetry: Big Ideas and Emotions in Poetry

Lesson 3 of 8

English

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Task 2: Now complete these tasks in full sentences:

1. How many stanzas does this part of the poem have?
2. Read the fourth stanza again. Explain in **one sentence** what is happening in this stanza.
3. The fourth stanza is longer than the others in the poem. Often stanza length is linked to the big ideas and emotions in poetry. Look at these lines from this stanza again.

They hold each other's hands
across the window ledge.
And look and look,
and know that they may never look again.

Finish this sentence with what you think is the best idea. The poet uses a longer stanza here in order to...

- a) ...show how the young couple want this moment to last forever.
- b) ...show the young woman's nervous energy. She can't stand the waiting any longer.
- c) ...show how anxious and frustrated the young couple are.



Task 2: Now complete these tasks in full sentences:

4. Now read the first stanza of the poem again. This stanza is the shortest from this part of the poem.

Will the train never start?
God, make the train start.

Finish this sentence with what you think is the best idea. The poet uses a shorter stanza here in order to...

- a) ...show how the young woman wants the moment to last.
- b) ...show the young woman's **nervous energy**. She can't stand the waiting any longer.
- c) ...show the young woman's anger because trains always set off late.

Nervous energy = feeling on edge
or uncomfortable and anxious
about a situation.



Task 3: Now complete this task

As well as stanza length being linked to the big ideas and emotions in a poem, so too is the way the stanzas are structured (organised). The stanzas in this poem are irregular as they vary in length and they are organised differently.

1. The characters in this poem are experiencing mixed emotions. What do you think are the top three emotions (feelings) that the poet shows us they are experiencing?

Emotion 1:

Emotion 2:

Emotion 3:

2. The stanzas in this poem are very irregular, they keep changing constantly. Thinking carefully about the task you have just completed, why might the poet have chosen irregular stanzas for this poem? What big ideas is she trying to get across to her readers?

