

AQA Poetry Revision Assignment

Due Friday, 14th January

Poem: 'Neutral Tones'

Summary: The narrator remembers with a bitter tone the painful day when his relationship came to an end. He does not refer specifically to what ended the relationship but mentions that 'love deceives'.

Viewpoint: first person male narrator

Language:

Pathetic fallacy

Semantic field of death and decay

Semantic field of colour (or a lack of it!)

Similes

Alliteration: tone of bitterness

Antithesis and oxymoron

Themes:

The loss of love can be painful

Love deceives

Key quotes:

'winter day'

'starving sod'

'grey' leaves

'God-curst sun'

'eyes that rove over tedious riddles of years ago'

'the smile on your mouth was the deadest thing'

'a grin of bitterness'

'like an ominous bird a-wing'

Form: Uses some ingredients of a dramatic monologue: speaker's thoughts and feelings shared with a silent listener (his lover)

Structure:

Cyclical structure: ends as it begins

ABAB – regular pattern symbolises there is no way forward, imprisoned by the verse's rigid structure

Break in rhythm's consistency after line 6: breakdown of relationship

Context:

Hardy known for his pessimism and failed relationships

Romantic poet: uses everyday language and nature imagery