



# Writing the IB

Poetry Commentary

# Examiner is looking for 4 things

1. Understanding and Interpretation (Criterion A)
2. Appreciation of Writer's Choices (Criterion B)
3. Organization (Criterion C)
4. Language (Criterion D)
  - grammatically clean, sentence sophistication, terminology, precision of language

# Two ways of approaching it

## Linear Approach

- Moves sequentially through the extract, analysing its progression in sections.
- Danger of this is to fall into just retelling the events.

## Conceptual Approach

- Divides the extract into different aspects of content or language.
- Danger- it's way more difficult to organize.

# Step 1- Annotations and Thought

- o Read and annotate the poem- at least twice
- o What are the things that you notice?
- o What key features of content, language and style struck you as most significant?
- o What kind of angle can you come up with? Is there an opposition? Is there something stylistically interesting to use as thesis?
- o From where does the poem gain its strength?
- o What kind of structure do you want to develop?

# Step 2- Thesis and Intro

- o Come up with your idea and flesh it out just a bit. You must have what IB calls a **“unifying argument”**.
- o Think of how you’re going to set it up. If you have an interesting intro idea, use it, but don’t be afraid to be super dry. /the main thing is the argument.
- o Be sure to include poem and author in the very beginning.

# Ideas for Conclusions

- o Don't restate your intro. That's lame.
- o What is the most important element of your argument?
- o What is the most significant strength of the poem?
- o What does the poem say about the human experience or the human condition?
- o What is the main effect of the poem on the reader?