

Goodison Poetry Table of Contents

Your IOC will be based on 1 of these 10 poems	Title of the Poem (If a poem doesn't appear to have a title, it is always the first line)	I have read and annotated this poem	I have completed an oral commentary outline	Notes/Other: Level of difficulty, something you need to go back to understand, main ideas, etc.
1.	"Concert"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	"From the Book of Local Miracles, Largely Unrecorded"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	"The River Wanted Out"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	"October in the Kingdom of the Poor"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	"Ground Doves"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.	"Praise to the Mother of Jamaican Art"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7.	"To Make Various Sorts of Black"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8.	"Mysteries"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9.	"I Know I Never Lose You"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10.	"Missing the Mountains"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

ANALYSIS: IN

"Title of Poem"

Author's Last Name

communicates/suggests/highlights/exemplifies/conveys/contrasts/emphasizes/reveals/shows/demonstrates/etc.

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Conclusion: Provide your overall interpretation by highlighting the key parts of your commentary.

Concert

1 Brother Kingsley had the swiftest legs,
they would move like sharpened blades
cutting through finishing line tapes
on sports days when we would receive
5 for prizes, dictionaries and holy Bibles.

He was a dancer, could split, snap-fall,
boogie, gallows, and shuffle better
than any other boy who called himself dancer.
As soon as his heels touched ground
10 they would lift up again, pushing against
slow air, seeking to align themselves
with the fastest moving currents in the atmosphere.

At the talent show, we were sure he'd win.
The entire school was behind him, cheering
15 his every turn, split and spin, he was winning
till he affected a clutching movement he had seen
the older men practice.

Miss Stirling judged that move
too adult and dangerous to youth.
20 She awarded the prize to a girl
who rattled out, with nervous pebbles
in her mouth, a dull unburnished memory gem.

Dressed as she was in a drooping slipper-satin
christian-quattie dress, we booed the results
25 of this unfair contest and spoke for years
of how they robbed him.

Thesis: In "

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*From the Book of Local Miracles,
Largely Unrecorded*

1 Write this truth now
of the simple faith
of my mother's friend.

5 Who set a pot of water
over a candlewood fire
when she knew she had no food.

And in it placed
a stone
and by it waited.

10 Just as the water
began to break
over the stone

15 enter one neighbor
with an abundance
of coconuts and ground provisions.

Then another
fresh from slaughter
offering a portion of goat's flesh.

20 My mother always pauses
at this point in the retelling
of the miracle

and adds to the text
"She even got oil
from the coconuts."

25 All that she needed
was salt.
And widows have that.

30 Prophets and widows,
self-replenishing
measures of meal,

never ending cruse of oil.
Bright angels appearing
to meet believers
at points of need

35 come again
when these women
call out for miracles.

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The River Wanted Out

1 Things are changing this side of the forest.
The river is ostriching into the sand
leaving dense stones to mark its place.
The crayfish grow thick flattened shells
5 and imitate land turtles.

The bulrushes, wild-haired and long limbed
when asked if they will remain
to remind us that here passed a river,
shake their locks till they blur and shriek
10 "We're going to be palm trees in the King's garden."

Now nobody will see their faces in this water mirror.
The ticki ticki will have no riverbottom
to shield them from the long lances of May rains.
But the worst fate of all will befall river Mumma.
15 She, stunning except for her scaly thighs and legs,

she who looked fine in the setting of the river,
will now have to land on her feet and learn walking,
a task requiring division of herself.
And when she walks like any ordinary woman,
20 she will have to sell her gold comb to buy unguents.

Unguents to smooth her scaly skin
in order to gain flat earth acceptance.
First the gold comb, then maybe herself,
the worst fate of all will befall the river Mumma
25 all because the river wanted out.

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October in the Kingdom of the Poor

1 October, month for rainy weather.
The evening sky above thick and purple,
at its heart hidden a white and watery moon.

And i wonder, is so six o'clock stay everywhere?

5 Like in that place in West Africa
where i come from as a child?

Where massa come from, is so it stay too?
And one mind say i wonder too much,
wonder . . . about things that have no answer.

10 Sometimes when i am standing, wondering
under an October sky, purple
like the royal robes of King Solomon,

a tafetta rain-streaked lavender-purple sky
like the wide skirts of queen elizabeth's dress,
15 sprinkled with stars silver and spaced

so that you can count them . . .
sometimes if i stand quite still,
the sky just drapes itself around my shoulders

and i stand robed, royal in the kingdom of the poor.

20 And then,
the stars just come and encircle my head
in a gracious diadem.

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Ground Doves

1 Small querulous birds
feathers like swatches of earth
graced with wings,
opt for walking.

5 The female ones
sport surprising underslips
trimmed with stunning passementerie.
Braided arabesques

10 scalloping round their hems
but that is rarely shown, except
when they bend to scramble
for stale bread crumbs

15 they have come to expect as due.
Ground doves make you uneasy
because there was a time
when you too walked

20 and saved your wings
and would not reach high
for the sweet risk
inside the lips of hibiscus

but saved your wings,
and scrambled for used bread
and left over things . . .

1. thesis: IN _____ "Title of Poem" _____ Author's Last Name _____ communicates/suggests/highlights/exemplifies/conveys/contrasts/emphasizes/reveals/shows/demonstrates/etc. _____

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Praise to the Mother of Jamaican Art

- 1 She was the nameless woman who created
images of her children sold away from her.
She suspended her wood babies from a rope
round her neck, before she ate she fed them.
- 5 Touched bits of pounded yam and plantains
to sealed lips, always urged them to sip water.
She carved them of wormwood, teeth and nails
her first tools, later she wielded a blunt blade.
Her spit cleaned faces and limbs; the pitch oil
10 of her skin burnished them. When woodworms
bored into their bellies she warmed castor oil
they purged. She learned her art by breaking
hard rockstones. She did not sign her work.



THESIS: III

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To Make Various Sorts of Black

- 1 According to the craftsman's handbook chapter XXXVII
Il libro dell'arte by Cennino d'Andrea Cennini
who tells us there are several kinds of black colors.
First, there is a black derived from soft black stone.
- 5 It is a fat color; not hard at heart, a stone unctoned.
Then there is a black which is made from vine twigs.
Twigs which choose to abide on the true vine
offering up their bodies at the last to be burned,
then quenched and worked up, they can live again
10 as twig of the vine black; not a fat, more of a lean
color favored alike by vinedressers and artists.
There is also the black that's made from burnt shells.
Markers of Atlantic's graves.
Black of scorched earth, of torched stones of peach;
15 twisted trees that bore strange fruit.
And then there is the black that is the source of light
from a lamp full of oil such as any thoughtful guest
waiting for bride and groom who cometh will have.
A lamp you light and place underneath—not a bushel—
20 but a good clean everyday dish that is fit for baking.
Now bring the little flame of the lamp up to the under-
surface of the earthenware dish (say a distance of two
or three fingers away) and the smoke which emits
from that small flame will struggle up to strike at clay.
25 Strike till it crowds and collects in a mess or a mass.
Now wait; wait a while please, before you sweep this
color—now sable velvet soot—off onto any old paper
or consign it to shadows, outlines and backgrounds.
Observe: it does not need to be worked up nor ground;
30 it is just perfect as it is. Refill the lamp, Cennino says,
As many times as the flame burns low, refill it.

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Mysteries

1 Amazing how this morning
I tilt the dark stained louvers
to slant the morning air in
and the green light of peridots
5 streams in and fills the room.

Maybe it's the work of the rain
kind rain cleaning the air
so that all around this hill
is the jewel glow the unstained aura
10 of new green and no bitterness.

No smoke which clings to or rises from
humans is anywhere this morning.
Of course it could be the Hope River
running strong after a long drink
15 of seven days August cloud burst rains.

Fresh river come calling bringing me my birthstone.
But that is just the top layer of my mind
always wanting explanations.
How to explain that girl we heard
20 in the Nameless cafe near the homeless

sleeping in Harvard Square, she sang
so unconvincingly of deprivation.
A state that she had yet to visit.
And how afterward we walked outside
25 as the October air was turning sharp.

We agreed then that it is pointless to sing
second hand of suffering, it sounds untrue.
It is pointless to try too hard
to penetrate the mysteries like peridots,
30 jewel of the lost ones, filling up my room.

And that house on the edge
of the Charles River in Cambridge.
Did we once on that last departure
see framed in the early morning
35 a Being of light at a Bay window?

And was that Being playing
our song of separation and reuniting
the one and the same song
upon that ivory-inlaid, that ceiling high
40 and splendid harp?

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"I Know I Never Lose You"

1 I know now that I never lose you.
Look how you came calling today
as thoughtful Sunday afternoon rain.

5 You in the making of escoveitch,
onions, pepper, pimento, oil and vinegar,
for you all rejoice together.

Shiver the air then.
Combined condiments of praise,
you numinous in everydays.

10 Now strewn over the fatness
of fried butter fish,
behold bright thanksgiving garnish.

15 Like salt stirred evenly,
into smooth food,
your presence permeates everything good.

Like oil in a cloth or dye
your substance imparted
changes the texture, the color of things.

20 You in all things, O everything,
all atoms saturated then
with your unction grace and presence.

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Missing the Mountains

1 For years I called the Blue Mountains home.
I spent my days faceting poems from rockstones.
By moonshine I polished them, they flashed fire like true gems.

I was included then in all the views of the mountains.
5 The hand that flung me down to the plains
was powered by the wrath of hurricanes.

Now from the flat lands of Liguanea
I view the mountains with strict detachment.
I remark upon their range and harmony of blues.

10 Respect due to their majesty, I keep my distance.
I must now carry proof of my past existence
in the form of one blue stone mined near mountain heart.

I show too a wildness, an intensity
drawn from the mountains' energy.
15 This is a request to all left behind me.

Bury me up there in the high blue mountains
and I promise that this time I will return to teach the wind
18 how to make poetry from tossed about and restless leaves.

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