



Welcome to WQE
Taster Materials 2020

A-level English

William Blake: **The Garden of Love**





Task 1: Research

Research William Blake on the internet, focusing in particular on his attitude to religion.



Task 2: First Impressions

Read “The Garden of Love” from *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and make notes using the headings on the next slide.

Voice

Structure

Setting

Form

Themes

Language



THE GARDEN OF LOVE

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen;
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.
And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.
And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their
rounds,
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.



Look at Blake's illustration of the poem again, focusing on the postures of the priest and the children, the expressions on their faces, and the colours surrounding them. How does the illustration link to the poem? What view of religion is expressed here?



Task 3: Detailed Reading

Now read through the poem again, answering the questions on the following slides.

Structure and form



	Rhyme scheme	Meter
Stanza 1	<i>abcb</i>	Trimeter
Stanza 2	<i>abcb</i>	Trimeter
Stanza 3	<i>abcd</i> but in the third and fourth lines, the end rhymes of the previous stanzas are replaced by internal rhymes : “gowns” and “rounds” in line 3 and “briars and “desires” in line 4.	Lines 1 and 2 – trimeter Lines 3 and 4 – tetrameter

What is the effect of the *variation* in **rhyme** and **rhythm** in stanza 3?

The Garden of Love – Stanza 1

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

What are the **connotations** of the phrase “the Garden of Love”? What does the **capitalisation** suggest about it?

What did the **narrator** used to do in “the Garden of Love”? What does this suggest about “the Garden of Love” before the “Chapel” was built?

What are the feelings of the **narrator** towards the “Chapel”? Why is “Chapel” **capitalised**?

How do the **rhyme** and **rhythm** reflect the **mood** of the poem?

The Garden of Love – Stanza 2

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And 'Thou shalt not' writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore,

How is the Chapel portrayed? What point is Blake making by portraying it like this?

Where does the phrase 'Thou shalt not' come from? What point is Blake making in using this phrase?

What does the final line suggest about "the Garden of Love"?

What does the **verb** "turn'd" suggest about the feelings of the **narrator**? How does this reflect Blake's own feelings towards religion?

The Garden of Love – Stanza 3

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns were walking their
rounds,
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

How has the “Garden of Love” changed? Why is this?

Look at the **lexis** in this stanza: “graves”, “tombstones”, “black”, “binding”, “briars”. What **connotations** do these words have?

What are the priests doing? What point is Blake making about them?

What is the effect of the change in **rhyme** and **rhythm** in the final two lines?



Final Task

Now complete **one** of the tasks below:

- Take part in an online discussion about the poem (see the next slide)
- Write a 500 word essay: 'How does Blake explore the theme of religion in The Garden of Love?'

Online Discussion

Log on to your Microsoft Teams group and make at least two comments – one from column A and one from column B. This is to get a discussion about the poem going, so please don't stop at two!

Column A	Column B
Make an observation about the poem – for example, what you thought the poem was about, or what you thought a particular word suggested.	Build on an observation someone else has made by responding to it.
Ask a question about the poem as a way of clearing up something you didn't understand.	Help your class mate out by clearing up something they didn't understand.
Ask a question about the poem as a starting point for discussion – for example, 'What did you think about...?'	Respond to someone else's discussion question.