



# The “BIG 5”

- Use the ‘Big 5’ as an organizing principle for the textual analysis. This gives focus, starting from the bigger contextual picture to a more detailed analysis of literary features. Be careful however that this does not lead to sounding like you are going through a checklist. In brief, the “Big 5”:
    - Audience/purpose
    - Theme/content
    - Tone/mood
    - Stylistic devices
    - Structure
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**Letter level (alliteration/consonance/onomatopoeia)**

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**Syllable level (iambs/trochee/etc.)**

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**Verse level (pentameter/trimester/etc.)**

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**Stance (quatrain/heroic couplet/etc.)**

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**Poem structure (English sonnet/Italian sonnet/ballad/etc.)**

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**Finally, one could explore conceptual devices such as imagery, metaphor, and other forms of figurative speech.**

**Zoom In**

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**Have an introduction and conclusion, with a guiding idea (usually a theme) around which the IOC is focused.**

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**It is not enough to simply include literary terms, concepts, and devices. One must explain why authors have employed certain devices. This requires a degree of interpretation that goes beyond summation. Consider the how as well as the what.**

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**Speak in present tense about the literary text. While the author may no longer live, the work lives on and carries meaning now, today.**

# Other Tips...



- Literary analysis of a previously analyzed poem or excerpt
- Student will not know beforehand which poem until the preparation period (20 minutes)

- No stopping of recording.
- Student will not know the work before the commentary.

# This is The IOC

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Students should aim to identify and explore all significant aspects of the extract. These include:

- situating the extract as precisely as possible in the context of the poem from which it has been taken (or in the body of work, in the case of a complete poem)
- commenting on the effectiveness of the writer's techniques, including the use of stylistic devices and their effect(s) on the reader.

The commentary should focus on the extract itself, relating it to the whole poem (or body of work when a complete poem is used). It should not be used as a springboard for a discussion of everything the student knows about the work in question.

A commentary should be sustained and well organized. It should neither be delivered as a series of unconnected points nor take the form of a narration or a line-by-line paraphrase of the passage or poem.

Students should talk up to, but not beyond, 8 minutes, with 2 minutes for subsequent questions. When students do not speak for up to 8 minutes, the remainder of the 10 minutes must be filled with subsequent questions.

# Focus and Structure

## **Guiding questions**

Teachers should set one or two questions for each extract.

Guiding questions should relate to some of the most significant aspects of the extract, and should help students to focus on their analysis. They should suggest areas for discussion, but students are free to use the guiding questions or not, as they choose. Students are not penalized if their commentary does not directly address the guiding questions.

The following list of guiding questions is intended to assist teachers in formulating their own questions. Teachers may also make direct use of sample questions that suit their chosen extracts. Some more sample questions are included in the teacher support material.

- What is the relationship between the title and the poem itself?
- How are sound effects employed in this poem?

- How does the progression of ideas contribute to the development of the theme(s)?
- How is the character of the speaker revealed through the diction employed?
- How does this poem seek to create an emotional response in the reader?
- How does stanza structure reflect the development of the poem's subject?
- In what ways does the final line/stanza change your understanding of the poem as a whole?
- How does the figurative language used by the poem aim to stimulate the reader's imagination?
- How does the punctuation used influence how the poem is read/heard?
- To what effect is rhythm used in this poem?
- In what ways does the tone shift throughout the poem?
- What might be considered ambiguous in this poem?
- How does this extract reveal the thoughts/feelings of the persona?
- How is figurative language used to convey the content?

## **Conduct of the individual oral commentary**

The time and place are chosen by the teacher, provided they are consistent with IB deadlines and regulations. Teachers may, if they wish, conduct all individual oral commentaries and discussions on one day or over several days. Students must be given adequate notice of when the oral will take place.

### **Preparation (20 minutes)**

During this time students are supervised. They are expected to:

- read the extract and accompanying guiding questions carefully
- identify and analyse closely all the significant aspects of the extract
- make notes for the commentary
- organize the structure of the commentary.

### **Delivery (8 minutes)**

Students must be allowed to deliver their commentaries without interruption and teachers must not distract students or attempt to rearrange their commentaries. Teachers may only intervene if a student panics and needs positive encouragement, or if a student is off target or is finding it difficult to continue.

### **Subsequent questions (2 minutes)**

Teachers must engage in a discussion with students to probe further into their knowledge and understanding of the extract or complete poem. In the case of less confident students, teachers must draw them out on the original guiding questions to give them the opportunity to improve or expand on doubtful or inadequate statements.

Teachers must be satisfied that students have understood specific words, phrases and allusions, as well as appreciated their importance within the extract or poem. They should also be satisfied that students understand the significance of the extract within the whole poem or, in the case of a complete poem, the relationship between the poem and other poems by that author that have been studied.

Teachers must satisfy themselves that students understand, and can comment on, the writer's technique.

## **Conduct of the discussion**

### **Transition from the commentary**

After the 10-minute commentary and subsequent questions, the teacher informs the student that the discussion is commencing (note that the recording device is not switched off).

The aim of the discussion is to engage the student in a literary discussion of the work. Prepared questions will be a starting point for the discussion, but the discussion need not be limited to those questions. Students should be given an opportunity to demonstrate their independent understanding of the work under discussion.

The questions below are intended as a guide. They may be used when appropriate to the work, but teachers are free to formulate their own questions.

## *Drama*

- Did you find the dramatist using different kinds of tension in the play in order to engage and hold the audience?
- What for you was the most riveting or satisfying moment in the play? Can you account for how the playwright managed to achieve that effect?
- What do you consider the strengths and weaknesses of the protagonist, and what effect do you think these have on the believability of the play?
- Who was your favourite or least favourite secondary character in the play? Can you see how the playwright elicited such a response?
- Do you think any profound human truths are being considered in this play or do you see its main purpose as keeping an audience interested in human behaviour?

*Prose other than fiction*

- What cultural aspects of the context do you think had the strongest impact on the writer's story?
- Is there any person in the work, other than the writer, whose presence you found to be forceful or memorable?
- Were there some aspects of life that you found significantly omitted in the writer's story of experience?
- What features of the work most attracted you, for example, the history or the geography, the encounters with people, or the personal reactions of the writer?
- What is the role of anecdote in the work and how well do you think this writer handled that feature?
- Do you have any reservations about the writer's responses or attitudes to the places/people/ideas?
- What human issues form the subjects of the work? Did you find any of them particularly well handled?
- Did you find the essayist skilled in bringing the work to a particularly satisfying conclusion?



# During the 20- minute Prep Time

- **Read the poem and the guiding questions carefully.**
- **Color mark/Underline key words/phrases and aspects you think are most interesting or about which you can talk most convincingly**
- **Formulate your Dominant Effect**
- **Identify your 2-3 aspects/themes you want to discuss. Write a brief summary of each**
- **Mark up the text so you know which points you'll use to discuss your aspects/themes.**
- **Decide on the best sequence to speak about your points. Linear or conceptual?**
- **Make sure your notes are clear to you.**
- **Spend any extra time rehearsing/practicing**

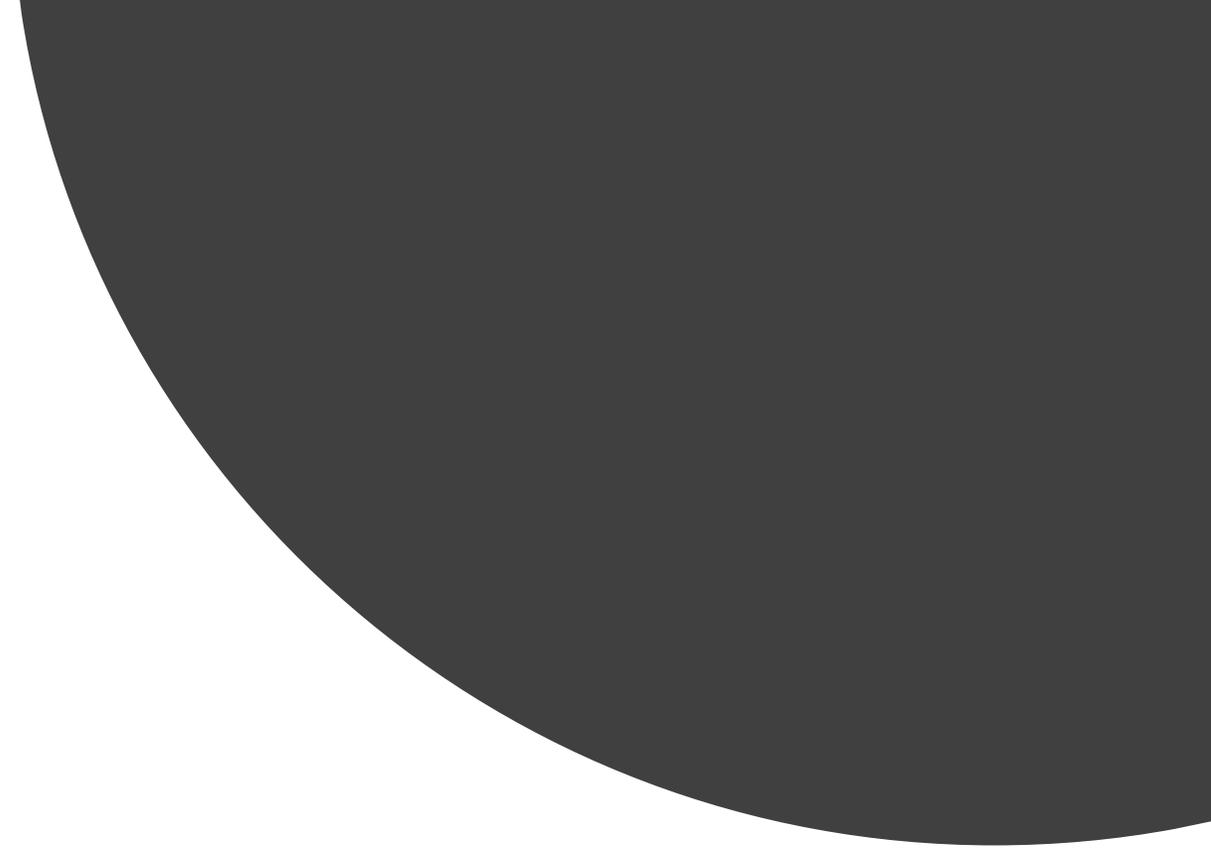
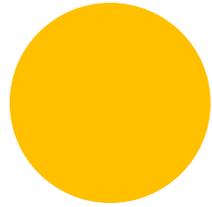
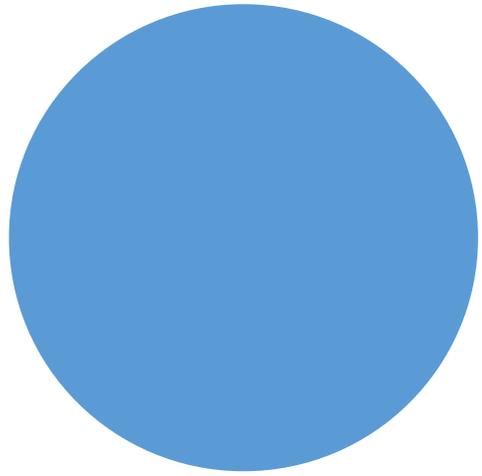


# **Tone of Voice**

- **Language should be formal and as technically accurate as you can make it**
- **Adopt a register appropriate to the thoughtful discussion of literature**
- **Your audience is not just me...it's also the examiner who will listen to the recording**
- **Speak in your own voice**
- **Speak clearly and relatively slowly**
- **Give the examiner a clear sense that you are enjoying the text and the process of analysis**

# Today's Agenda

- 10 minutes to “fill in the gaps” of any groups that are missing one of the last 4 poems.
- 10 minutes to finish “The IOC/D Lecture”
- 20 minute prep of Frost poem



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Day of The IOC/D

Timing of the  
Commentary & The  
Discussion

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**State your candidate number at the start (*I'll have it for you.*)**

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**Identify the poem, summarize it, and put it in context**

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**State your dominant effect**

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**If you wish, outline what you plan to cover**

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**This introduction should not take more than 1 minute**

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**Commentary Intro (~1 min)**

# **Commentary Body (ca. 6 min)**

- **Discuss the writer's choices of particular literary features**
- **The real credit comes from recognizing HOW and WHY you think the writer uses them**
- **Point, evidence, analysis = Identify a feature. Quote the key words. Analyze how the technique works.**
- **You should be prepared with 3-4 points for each aspect/theme/important feature you want to discuss**
- **Aim for each aspect/theme/feature to take 2-3 minutes to explore**

The conclusion may be brief

You need to draw your commentary to a recognizable end and finish off effectively

Maybe:

- look at the way the poem ends and Frost's choice of language there OR
- state what you think is the most important element of the poem OR
- comment on the main way the poem influences the reader OR summarize how it fits into the rest of his work

Key is to sound focused and assured

**Conclusion  
(30 sec. to  
1 min)**

01

For the next 2 minutes I will ask you questions about the poem.

02

My goal is to help you score as high as possible

03

Answer the questions as best you can, making your point, backing it up with quoted evidence, and discussing the HOW or WHY (effects of Frost's choices)

# Teacher Questions about the Poem

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**You will turn over a card**

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**On the card will be a title: *Hamlet* or *Down Second Avenue***

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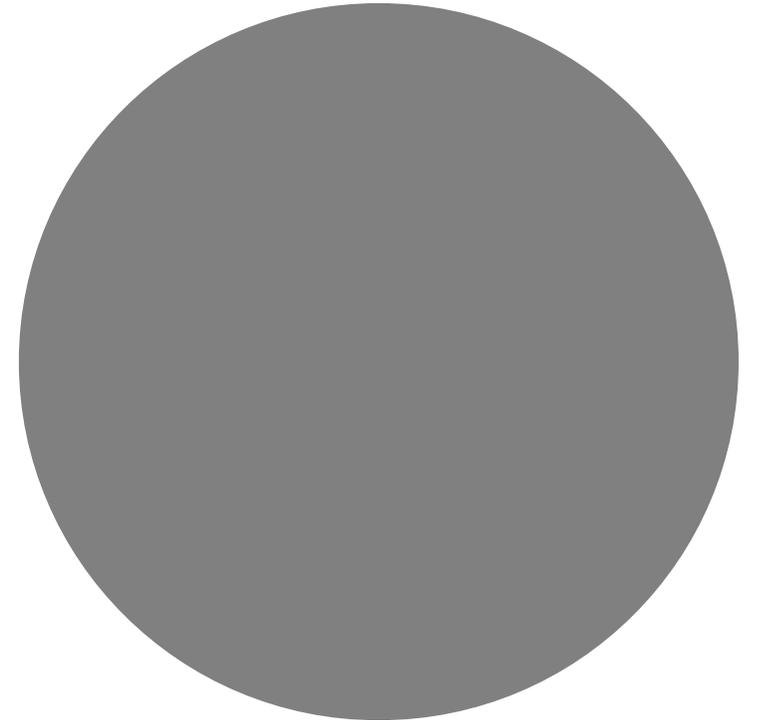
**For the next 10 minutes we will discuss the work on the card**

**IOD**

- You will have the same first question no matter which work:

- **Which aspect of [the work] did you find most powerful?**

**Prepare to answer this question. You should have an answer plus specific evidence to support your point. Even better if you can deliver a fully developed and elaborated answer.**





Hopefully a  
discussion ;)

**The IOD conversation will follow from there. Questions will, I hope, develop from the initial conversation, but if not they will be similar to the journal questions for DSA and the review questions on the Socratic Seminars for the two works.**

# OUR BODY OF WORK

- "A Considerable Speck" (1939)
- "Love and a Question" (1913)
- "After Apple Picking" (1914)
- "Mending Wall" (1914)
- "The Road Not Taken" (1916)
- "Birches" (1916)
- "Out, Out—" (1916)
- "An Old Man's Winter Night" (1916)
- "Bond and Free" (1916)
- "Carpe Diem" (1916)
- "A Brook in the City" (1923)
- "A Young Birch" (1946)