


Module 5: The Literary Response to the Changing World

Topic 2 Content: "To His Coy Mistress" TPCASTT

Introduction

"To His Coy Mistress" TPCASTT

Title	<h4>Introduction</h4> <p>In this interactivity, click the <i>NEXT</i> button to examine and analyze the poem "To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell, using the TPCASTT method.</p> 
Paraphrase	
Connotation	
Attitude/Tone	
Shift	
Title Revisited	
Theme	

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Title

"To His Coy Mistress" TPCASTT

Title	Title
Paraphrase	<p>By considering the title "To His Coy Mistress," you can already guess that at least one of the characters featured in this poem is a woman, and the pronoun <i>his</i> indicates that she has a suitor. What do you think the relationship between the two lovers might be like?</p> <p>Think about the word <i>coy</i> in the title. The word <i>coy</i> means "shy" or "demure." A coy person may be innocently reluctant, but often he or she is purposely showing hesitance in order to tease or attract. What predictions can you make about what might be said to this "coy mistress"?</p>
Connotation	
Attitude/Tone	
Shift	
Title Revisited	
Theme	

By considering the title "To His Coy Mistress," you can already guess that at least one of the characters featured in this poem is a woman, and the pronoun *his* indicates that she has a suitor. What do you think the relationship between the two lovers might be like?

Think about the word *coy* in the title. The word *coy* means "shy" or "demure." A coy person may be innocently reluctant, but often he or she is purposely showing hesitance in order to tease or attract. What predictions can you make about what might be said to this "coy mistress"?

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Paraphrase

"To His Coy Mistress" TPCASTT

Title

Paraphrase

Connotation

Attitude/Tone

Shift

Title Revisited

Theme

Paraphrase

Review this example paraphrase of the poem:

If we had all the time in the world
It wouldn't be a crime for you to be so coy
We'd have time to sit and worry about which way
To go, and spend all day doing only that
You by the side of the Ganges River
Would find rubies; I in the waters of
The Humber Estuary would whine. I would
Love you from even before Noah and the Flood
And you could even refuse me
Until the future conversion of the Jews
My love would grow
Bigger than empires, and more slow
I would spend a hundred years praising
Your eyes and gazing at your forehead
I would spend two years adoring each breast
And thirty thousand years adoring the rest of you
At least a whole era dedicated to every part

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And thirty thousand years adoring the rest of you
At least a whole era dedicated to every part
And after that you would show me your heart
Because you deserve this much lovely treatment
And I would never love you by any amount less
But in the back of my mind I'm always
thinking
About how quickly time goes by

And all around I see
Infinite stretches of desert
Your beauty will be lost
And in your tomb the only sound
Will be my echoing songs; then worms will take
Your chastity that you guarded
And your virtue and honor will turn to dust
And so will my lust
The grave's a nice, private place
But I don't think anyone there is hugging
So while you still have time
And youthful beauty
And while your soul still breathes
With passion through every pore
Now let us enjoy ourselves while we can
And now, like birds of prey in love
Let's devour Time right now
Rather than languish like prey in his mouth
Let's roll all our strength
And sweetness up into one ball
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life
So even though we can't make time
Stand still, we'll be the ones chasing time instead

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Connotation

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Title	<h4>Connotation</h4> <p>The poem includes many references that have special connotations. For example, how do you interpret the phrase "vegetable love"? Vegetables may lead you to think of a garden, which is organic. In other words, the speaker's love is associated not with objective reason but with subjective passion. It grows like a plant with potential to be large and beautiful.</p>
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Attitude/Tone

"To His Coy Mistress" TPCASTT	
Title	Attitude/Tone The tone of the poem can be described as passionate. It begins as playful and lighthearted, but later it takes on a more serious and urgent attitude.
Paraphrase	
Connotation	
Attitude/Tone	
Shift	
Title Revisited	
Theme	

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Shift

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Title	<h4>Shift</h4> <p>The word <i>but</i> is one of the most common words that indicates a shift in a poem. The second section of the poem begins a shift when the speaker says, "But at my back I always hear." In the first part of the poem, the speaker is basically saying, "If we had all this time..." The second part of the poem finishes that thought by concluding, "but we do <i>not</i> have all this time." In the third part of the poem, when the speaker begins with "Now therefore...", he offers his solution to the coy mistress that they should seize the day and enjoy life while they are still young.</p>
Paraphrase	
Connotation	
Attitude/Tone	
Shift	
Title Revisited	
Theme	

The word *but* is one of the most common words that indicates a shift in a poem. The second section of the poem begins a shift when the speaker says, "But at my back I always hear." In the first part of the poem, the speaker is basically saying, "If we had all this time..." The second part of the poem finishes that thought by concluding, "but we do *not* have all this time." In the third part of the poem, when the speaker begins with "Now therefore...", he offers his solution to the coy mistress that they should seize the day and enjoy life while they are still young.

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Title Revisited

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Title	<h4>Title Revisited</h4> <p>Now that you have closely examined the poem, you can revisit the title and reassess any predictions that you made. You know now that the speaker is the male suitor, and throughout the poem, he is addressing his coy girlfriend. You understand that the speaker tells his lover to seize the day and stop being so coy with him. While he certainly admires the beauty of the mistress, you might question whether he loves her for her personality, or is all his attraction simply physical desire?</p>
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Connotation	
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Now that you have closely examined the poem, you can revisit the title and reassess any predictions that you made. You know now that the speaker is the male suitor, and throughout the poem, he is addressing his coy girlfriend. You understand that the speaker tells his lover to seize the day and stop being so coy with him. While he certainly admires the beauty of the mistress, you might question whether he loves her for her personality, or is all his attraction simply physical desire?

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Theme

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Title	Theme As is the case for most Cavalier poems, the theme of "To His Coy Mistress" embraces the philosophy of <i>carpe diem</i> , or "seize the day." To the speaker, life is too short to let love be wasted away beyond the glory of youth.
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As is the case for most Cavalier poems, the theme of "To His Coy Mistress" embraces the philosophy of *carpe diem*, or "seize the day." To the speaker, life is too short to let love be wasted away beyond the glory of youth.